



CONSIDERATIONS

O N

INDIA AFFAIRS,

PART II.

CONTAINING

A complete VINDICATION of the AUTHOR, from the
MALICIOUS and GROUNDLESS CHARGES of MR. VERELST :

W I T H

A just EXPOSURE of the FATAL IGNORANCE and INJUSTICE of the
late Courts of EAST INDIA DIRECTORS in LONDON, and of the
Oppressions and Iniquities of their late GOVERNING-SERVANTS
in BENGAL.

The Whole supported by so copious a Collection of INDISPUTABLE AUTHORITIES,
as will effectually demonstrate what immense Injuries have been suffered therefrom by.

THE COMPANY, the subjected PROVINCES in INDIA,
and this KINGDOM.

BY WILLIAM BOLTS.

L O N D O N :

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Exchange.

MDCCCLXXV.



P R E F A C E.

IN defence of the former part of this Publication, against Mr. *Verelst*, the writer has found it necessary to enter minutely into the Administration of the Government of *Bengal*, under the late Presidents and Select Committees. The whole of what he had to say, on that subject, was printed off before the death of Lord *Clive*, reserving a few pages for the conclusion of the sixth Chapter, which relates to the *Armenian* Merchants, whose causes were then on the point of decision in the Court of Common Pleas: on which account likewise this publication was postponed. It is unfortunate for the writer, that his work will now appear after the death of the noble Lord, whose conduct, as President of *Bengal*, is particularly pointed at. But to avoid the appearance of a malignity which he never harboured, by letter of the 28th *November* 1774, he acquainted one of his Lordship's Executors with the then state of this work, which he offered to submit to their inspection: and he has now only to assure the Public, that every word it contains stands as it was originally intended for his Lordship's eye.

This publication, however, has been already too long delayed, in hopes of final decisions in the Courts of Law, on some matters that are therein treated of. But the law-practices of injunctions, demurrers, new trials, writs of error, bills of exception, and appeals from one Court to another, which are become matters of course, where the parties have wealth equal to the expence, furnish an indefinite latitude for delay. As the same reason for procrastination



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craftination might therefore still subsist at the expiration of several years more, the writer could not suffer falsehood and injustice any longer to prevail over truth and innocence, from the misinformation that has been obtruded on the minds of mankind.

Among many other subjects in which the interests of the Public are more materially concerned, the following sheets present to the reader a complicated scene of injustice that has been practised towards the writer. But great as have been his sufferings, he has the satisfaction to reflect, that, unconnected with party-affairs, he has sustained them all in the cause of humanity, without any partial view of his own. The oppressions which have stripped him of his fortune have not been able to reach his mind : and though single and unsupported against the combined forces of wealth, power, influence, and connexions, he yet sees no ground on which he is not able to meet his enemies, from a consciousness that the most inveterate of them can justly accuse him of nothing worse than knowing their iniquities and forgiving their injuries.

He entertains no unjust resentments against the late Governors and Councils of *Bengal* ; and his publications will demonstrate that he has not consulted his own interest, in any of the public transactions in which he has been concerned. He therefore hopes no asperity of thought or expression will be found in any part of his writings, but such as is not only fully justified by the facts treated of, but such as those facts would have made it criminal, in the most unconcerned narrator, to have softened.

He also hopes apologies for imperfections in his work will be thought needless, from the candid allowance which every considerate reader, who reflects on the embarrassments, perplexities, and difficulties which he has had to encounter,



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encounter, will be naturally disposed to make. Errors of the press, and even imperfections in composition, he therefore relies on the reader's goodness to excuse. His sole aim has been to furnish important information, which he has endeavoured faithfully to do : and for nothing else does he presume to be a candidate for fame.

The numerous papers contained in the APPENDIX are arranged under distinct heads, for the sake of perspicuity, as to matters and dates ; and they may be considered as separate historical narrations with respect to the subjects of each collection. On this account many explanatory notes were deemed necessary ; and if any of them should appear to be repeated in such a multiplicity of materials, or to have been given in substance in any part of the text, the writer, thereon, humbly requests the indulgence of the candid reader, who is likewise desired to cancel the note in page 287 of the APPENDIX, as the letter there referred to has been since found in one section of the Company's *Persian* Correspondence.



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WITH A REFUTATION

OF

MR. VERELST'S First CHARGE of GUILT
on the WRITER.

WHEN the book intituled *Considerations on India Affairs* was first submitted to the public, the writer did intend to have inserted his own case therein, as he could not furnish any instances of more unjustifiable, arbitrary, and oppressive conduct in the superior servants of the *East India* Company, than what he had himself experienced, and could fully prove. But having at that time, though much against his inclination, several actions and suits at law depending, against the Company and their late *Bengal*-servants, he carefully avoided the insertion of any matter relating to himself; confining his representations, as much as his facts would admit, to general objects, in which the public were most concerned. Several cogent reasons however, at this time, combine to render that caution unnecessary.

First, Because Mr. *Harry Verelst*, late Governor of *Bengal*, and principal defendant in the writer's suits, hath since caused a book to be published, with his name * prefixed to it, in which it evidently appears to have been his chief view, to invalidate the strong charges and true informations contained in *Considerations on India Affairs*; by heaping groundless accusations, with illiberal invectives, on their author: for to that one purpose have Mr. *Verelst*'s writers actually appropriated the first forty-two pages of their work.

Secondly, Because, in consequence of the oppressive proceedings of Mr. *Verelst*, and the other superior servants of the *East India* Com-

* A View of the rise, progress, and present state of the *English* government in *Bengal*.



pany, the writer hath been reduced from affluence to bankruptcy ; while most of his creditors, both in *Asia* and *Europe*, have little knowledge of the means whereby that ruin has been effected, in which they are eventually become the innocent sufferers ; and much less of the inefficacy, in the writer's case, of the laws under which alone they and he can expect ample justice.

Thirdly, Because the ruin of any other resident under the protection of the *British* flag in *Asia*, may yet be effected by the same means, to the great injury of his Majesty's *Asiatic* and *European* subjects ; against which evils the laws at present existing afford no adequate security.

Fourthly, Because, if the truth and efficacy of *Considerations*, &c. are to depend upon the veracity of the author, and that is to be decided on from pretended authorities in Mr. *Verelst*'s book, it is to be feared, that when the ruling powers of the state may be framing their ultimate resolutions concerning the government of the subordinate kingdoms in *India*, the minds of too many, who act for the community, may be influenced to doubt of the most important truths, from having been insidiously prejudiced against the man who pronounced them.

As this publication is, therefore, become an act of necessity with regard to himself, of justice towards his creditors, and of absolute duty respecting the public, the writer flatters himself that every candid reader will admit the propriety of the insertion of such parts of it as relate to his own case.

It is fortunate for the cause of truth, that the inquiries of the Select and Secret Committees of the Honourable House of Commons, on *India* affairs, in the years 1772 and 1773, have already laid open and proved so much before the public, that it will require little trouble to establish all the facts produced in the writer's *Considerations*, &c. beyond the power of cavil or misrepresentation to invalidate. In his present publication, therefore, the writer will pass over no part of the misconduct ascribed to him, nor conceal the least circumstance, within his knowledge, that can in any degree contribute to the justification of his adversaries. To every charge against himself he will give greater force than even *they* can expect ; and rely, for his own vindication, on the plain evidence of such truths as shall appear incontrovertible.

But it may be necessary here to premise, that the oppressions of which the writer has most reason to complain, and in which Mr. *Verelst* acted as principal persecutor, happened in the years 1767
and



and 1768, though in search of pretences for accusation, that gentleman has had recourse to incidents which occurred under another government, in the year 1762; and by artfully misrepresenting, interweaving, and confounding distinct and distant transactions, has sought to apologize for, or vindicate, the oppressions which six years afterwards were suffered from his own arbitrary acts.

In order, therefore, to enable the reader to judge rightly of the whole of his merits or demerits, while dependent on the *English East India Company*, the writer is under the necessity of recurring back to the first commencement of his connexions with them. And though the struggles he has been engaged in, first with the Governor and Council in *Bengal*, and afterwards with the *East India Directors* in *London*, may, at first sight, appear mere matters of private or party-contention, between him and the ruling servants of the Company; yet, upon the whole, it will be found, that the future safety and welfare of every subject, who now is, or hereafter may become an inhabitant of *Asia*, under the sanction of the *British* laws, are deeply involved in his cause, and must be greatly affected by its issue.

The plunder which the superior servants of the Company acquired in the year 1757, upon making their first Nabob, *Meer Mahommed Jaffer Ally Khawn*, after the expulsion and murder of the Nabob *Serajah al Dowlah*, not only suddenly enabled many of them to return to *England* with princely fortunes, but introduced among them a spirit so impatient of * controul, as did at last induce the Court of Directors to dismiss several of those remaining, from the service. The unexpected resignations of the superior servants, the sudden change in the situation of the Company, from a simple commercial, to a political and military community, and the rapid successions which the vacancies so occasioned brought on, whereby young and unexperienced men were suddenly advanced to the highest and most important offices, influenced the Court of *East India Directors*, in the year 1759, to depart from the regular usage established in their service, of recruiting the number of their civil servants from youths at the ages of sixteen, in the capacity of writers, to rise by regular succession.

* See a letter from Colonel *Robert Clive* and others, of the 29th *December* 1759; which occasioned the dismissal of the subscribers, whom the Directors thereupon ordered to be sent to *England* by the first ships. Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 902.



No plea, however, less forcible than that of absolute necessity, could be justly urged in excuse for such a deviation from the established custom; as many evils, since experienced, have resulted to the Company from the partial abuses that followed the introduction of supercessions; when their servants could find no security in their stations, from long and meritorious services. But, without commenting on the propriety of the appointments so made at that period, the reader is to be informed, that in the year 1759, *William Bolts* petitioned the Company, in the usual mode, to be admitted into their service: on which, the Court of Directors were pleased to appoint him a factor, with nine other gentlemen, on the *Bengal*-establishment. The motives assigned, by the Directors, for making of those extraordinary appointments, will be seen in the following extract from their general letter to *Bengal*, dated *London*, the 23d November 1759, paragraph the XL.

“ Observing that so many gentlemen of superior stations on your
 “ establishment have resigned our service, and that others are pre-
 “ paring to leave it, we have thought it expedient to engage
 “ some persons, well experienced in business, in some measure to
 “ supply that defect; and have accordingly appointed them factors,
 “ to be ranked, under our Presidency at *Fort William*, in the fol-
 “ lowing order, *viz.*

JOHN REED,
 PETER DOWNES,
 JA. PHILIP LYON,
 WALTER STEVENS,
 FRANCIS HARE,

JOSEPH JEKYLL,
 JOHN WOOD,
 HENRY HALL,
 WILLIAM BODLE, and
 WILLIAM BOLTS.

“ And we do appoint them to take their station on the list,
 “ next under Mr. *Thomas French*; and that such their rank be
 “ constantly preserved, by their being *at no time hereafter super-*
 “ *seded by any one who does now, or shall stand below them, without*
 “ *our express directions in that * behalf.*”

Before we proceed further, it may be necessary to give the reader some information of the state and mode of carrying on the trade of the Company and their servants in *India*, at this period.

* The Directors who signed this letter were as follow: *Peter Godfrey, John Boyd, Henry Crabb Boulton, Charles Cutts, John Harrison, George Dudley, John Browne, George Roocke, Bouchier Walton, Henry Hadley, George Stevens, Christopher Baron, William Thornton, Fitz William Barrington, Richard Seward, Jacob Bosanquet, John Raymond, Frederick Pigou, S. Harrison, Thomas Waters, Richard Smith.*



The old *East India* Company, when their trade in *Bengal* was very inconsiderable, had agreed with the Nabob, that their goods should pass duty-free within his dominions, upon the annual payment of 3000 rupees into his treasury at *Hongly*; which privilege was confirmed by the Emperor *Aurungzebe*. Upon the union of the two Companies, in the year 1702, the new United Company succeeded of course to the enjoyment of all the immunities possessed by the old one. The experience which they had had, before the year 1700, of the advantages to be acquired over an *Indian* rabble, by the regular military-discipline of *Europeans*, emboldened them to INSIST on the privilege of trading * custom-free, as their right. At this early period it was not unusual for the servants of the Company to † cover, under their dustuck, the goods of the natives, and people of other countries, thereby defrauding the *Indian* government of its duties. Such practices occasioned frequent

* *Extract of the Company's General Letter to Fort William.*
Dated the 26th Feb. 1702-3.

“ You must insist upon it, as our right, that we be custom-free in *Bengal*, *Patna*, and
“ *Orissa*, on the payment of 3000 rupees a year; that our dustucks pass in all places;
“ that our grant of *Calcutta* and adjacent towns be continued; and that all the other
“ privileges and advantages, obtained by the old Company formerly, or by them, or
“ the new Company of late, be enjoyed by this United Company, according to the true
“ meaning and full intent of the said grants; and we would have the servants of each
“ Company do all they can to keep us in quiet enjoyment of the said privileges, by re-
“ presenting to the government, *you are now THE ENGLISH NATIONAL COMPANY*,
“ justly intitled to those privileges.”—See Reports of the Honourable House of Com-
mons 1772 and 1773; vol. III. page 477.

† *Extract of the Company's General Letter to Fort William.*
Dated the 2d of March 1702-3.

“ Our privileges in *Bengal*, of being custom-free, except the yearly acknowledgment
“ of 3000 rupees, are so essential a property to this Company, and of such great impor-
“ tance to us, that it requires the utmost steady care and fidelity to preserve them. It
“ was an expensive war, a stoppage of trade, and other accidents that retrieved them,
“ after they had been lost chiefly by the feuds among our servants; *who, to justify*
“ *their own quarrels, exposed the unfaithfulness of their chief to the government*; that he
“ covered the Moors and other nations goods *by our dustucks*, and thereby defrauded
“ the Nabob and other Governors of their duties. To prevent the like evil for the
“ future, we order you to cause a common-seal, or *chop*, to be made, for the sealing of
“ dustucks and other public uses, with such words, or motto, as you shall judge most
“ proper; which seal, or *chop*, we would have remain in the custody of the Secretary,
“ under the keys, or seals of our two chairmen, not to be used but in the presence of
“ them both: and the Secretary must attest and register all dustucks which you grant,
“ and which we hereby direct *shall be granted for English people's goods, and no others.*”
Ibid.

embroils



embroils with the Nabobs of *Bengal*, or their officers; and, on account of such illicit trade, the Company were often obliged to pay considerable sums of money, by way of fines; for as the trade of the Company and their servants increased to an unexpected degree, their trading duty-free occasioned great loss in duties to the Nabobs, and was very injurious to the native merchants. In order, therefore, to obtain a further sanction for this indulgent privilege, in the year 1716, the embassy was sent to *Dehly* which obtained the grand * Firmaun from the Mogul Emperor, *Furrukhsheer*, whereby the greatest latitude was given to the Company, of trading duty-free, in all articles, throughout the whole dominions of the Mogul.

Although at this period all the *English* in *Bengal* traded under the sanction of the Company's dustuck, yet it had not been customary for them to trade in salt, or grain; and therefore when they first attempted so to do, in the year 1728, under privilege of their Firmaun, *duty-free*, it occasioned † complaints to be sent, by the government-officers at *Hoogly*, to the Court at *Murshedabad*. And, as many disputes had arisen with the *Indian* government, from the licentious use made of the privileges granted to the Company; in order to prevent abuses of the dustuck-rights in future, the Directors did, from time to time, make various regulations of restraint, and at last, in the year 1748, they confined the use of them to their covenanted servants only, and forbade their being granted on any other occasion, except for such goods as were brought from the interior country by contractors, on their account, or for such goods as any merchant should buy of the Company, to be carried inland. In all other cases, every person was to prosecute trade according to the known established-laws of the country.

Such were clearly the ideas of the several Courts of Directors, from the first ‡ foundation of the Company. Trade was to be free,

* That the reader may judge for himself of the meaning of this Firmaun, we have given a copy of the *Persian* original, (which we have procured since the publication of the first part of *Considerations*, &c.) with a strictly literal translation subjoined. See Appendix, Letter A. Number II. pages 6 and 11.

† See Appendix A. Number III. page 13.

‡ In further support of this assertion, it may not be improper to recite the following extract from a book, intitled, "*An Impartial Vindication of the English East India Company, from the unjust and slanderous imputations cast upon them in a treatise, intitled, A Justification of the Directors of the Netherlands East India Company* ; printed, London, anno 1688, page 222, viz.

" Though we have owned before (as we can never disown what is just in itself) that it is lawful for any nation, in *India*, to make exclusive contracts with any Prince or people



free, but abuses were to be prevented. And in support of the authorities already quoted on these points, it appears, by the whole of

people there, and to secure the performance of those contracts by settling factories, or forts, in such contracting *Indian* Princes dominions : yet so just and generous are the *English East India* Company, that they do not only allow refreshments of all kinds to the *French, Dutch, Danes, Portuguese*, and all nations in amity with our Sovereign Lord the King, as well natives as *Europeans* ; but also do allow them free liberty of all manner of trade and commerce, and in all kind of commodities, from, or to any port, or place in *India* whatsoever, as freely as the Company's own servants, or any *English* free-man can, or may : and also to reside at *Bombay*, or *Fort St. George*, and to rent, or purchase houses or lands there ; and in all respects to have the same liberty and freedom for landing or shipping of goods, and selling or disposing of them to whom they please, as the *English* themselves have ; and to be in the like capacity of being Aldermen or Burgeses of the corporation at *Fort St. George*, and *Bombay*, whatever faith or religion they are, or may be of, as the native *English* of those places are. And this we have authority from the said Company to publish and avow, in their names, to the whole world ; to the intent that merchants of all nations may know with what liberty, security, and freedom they may resort to both or either of those places."

See also the following copies of the 37, 38, and 39th paragraphs of the Company's general letter to *Fort William*. Dated the 17th June 1748.

Par. 37. " And that there may be no doubt as to the persons who are to enjoy the benefit of the dustucks, it is hereby declared, that all goods imported and exported by the Company, or for their account, are to be sent with dustucks, and every merchant who contracts with the Company, shall be intitled to a dustuck, for importing whatever he may have so contracted for ; but not for the exportation of the same, unless, in case of damages, in order to send them back to the Aurungs, to have the goods new washed, or repaired. All merchants who buy goods of the Company to send into the country for sale, shall be intitled to dustucks for that purpose ; for which goods only, besides them, our immediate covenant-servants are to be intitled to dustucks, and them under these regulations : but every person making a false declaration, on requesting for a dustuck, or importing or exporting goods with dustucks otherwise than allowed as above, or prostituting the dustuck in any way whatsoever than it is asked for, shall be immediately dismissed from our service, and sent home : and every merchant dealing with the Company, who shall commit any fraud in the dustuck, shall be excluded from having any further dealings with the Company, directly or indirectly ; and all the goods imported, or exported in a fraudulent manner, shall be deemed unlicensed trade, and shall be confiscated accordingly ; one third to the Company, one third to the informer, and the remaining third to the Register of the dustucks.

Par. 38. And in cases where the Company's affairs are involved with the country-government, by means of any abuses of the dustucks, the person who shall have committed such abuse shall be answerable for the same, to the country-government, out of their estates ; or if a native, shall be delivered up to the country-government, as a person having forfeited the protection of the Company, if he do not make such satisfaction as may immediately extricate the Company's affairs.

Par. 39. Every person dealing in *Bengal* salt, or any other reserved, or prohibited commodity, contrary to the known established laws of the country, shall be dealt with as if he, or they had committed a fraud in the dustucks ; but in case the country-government pretend, by any new laws or prohibitions, to encroach on the privileges granted to



of the correspondence of the Directors, down to the year 1764, that their sentiments were in favour of the freedom of trade, and of discouraging all monopolies, except their own. In the year 1757, they gave express directions to their respective Presidencies, "That all persons under the protection of the Company should have the liberty of resorting to, and trading at all and any of the Company's settlements in the *East Indies*, and at *all other places* within the Company's limits, in as full, true, and extensive a manner as the rest of the Company's servants, they paying the duties, according to the usual and customary rates established at such places. And all persons who should resort to, or trade, either by themselves or their agents, at *Fort St. George, Fort*

and hitherto enjoyed by the Company, and those under our protection, *you are, at all events, to resist such unjust attempts*; and if you cannot procure relief by amicable means, you are to obtain it *by making use of all the force you have*, as we wish, on no account, to submit to any innovation, which may, either at present or hereafter, disgrace the Company, or be prejudicial to her interests." Vide Reports, vol. III. page 478.

Copy of the 43d paragraph of the Company's general letter to *Fort William*. Dated the 19th February 1762.

"By the directions we gave in our letter of the 1st April 1760, we meant, that the Nabob should not be defrauded of his duties by any abuse of the dustuck, *nor private traders oppressed*; but as it appears, by your advices of the 16th January 1761, that the farming the duties of the Nabob, and the other methods we have pointed out, are not practicable, we must therefore acquiesce in their not being carried into execution. At the same time we repeat and enforce what we mentioned in our said letter, that, at all events, the dustucks are to be put upon such a footing as to secure the government their duties, and enable the merchants to pay our customs." Ibid. page 481.

Mr. *Vanfittart*, who was as well acquainted with this matter as any man, in his answer to a pamphlet of the late Director, *Scrafton*, upon this subject, and particularly the trade in salt, concludes thus: "Many books and papers were lost at the capture of *Calcutta* in 1756, of which the Directors being advised, they formed, in 1758, a new system, or collection of laws, for the government of their servants in *Bengal*; among which laws, nothing is mentioned on the subject of the inland-trade. Upon the whole, I must repeat, that there was not, according to the best of my knowledge, any express order against this trade, until the 8th February 1764. It was treated in general as illicit, as not being a Firmaun-privilege, and *under that to be carried on custom-free*; but it seemed always left open for the inhabitants residing under the Company's protection to deal in, equally with the other inhabitants of the country, under the Nabob's pafs, and paying his duties.

"The orders of the 8th February 1764, were of very short duration; for two months after their arrival came an explanation, which brought the matter back to the footing just mentioned. The agents in *Bengal* were informed, as the Director says, that "Lord *Clive* and the Committee would have powers to regulate the inland-trade;" and he adds, "meaning to regulate it so, that it should neither be oppressive to the natives, nor hurtful to the Nabob's revenue."—See a letter to the Proprietors of *East India Stock*, from *Henry Vanfittart*, printed for *J. Newbery* 1767, pages 121 and 122.

William



“ *William*, or *Bombay*, and their respective dependencies, were to buy
 “ and sell publicly or privately, as they themselves should choose,
 “ dealing freely, and without restraint, with whomsoever they
 “ should think proper: and if, contrary to this article, they should
 “ be oppressed, or injured by any person whatsoever, such person
 “ or persons, let their rank be what it might, should incur the
 “ highest displeasure and resentment of the Court.”

By the covenants which *William Bolts* entered into with the Company, in the year 1759, he was authorized to trade in any port, or place, within the limits of their charter; subject to such lawful regulations and limitations as the Court of Directors had already established, or might from time to time, thereafter, direct and appoint. With respect to trade, therefore, he was undoubtedly to be allowed the same privileges as every other person residing under the protection of the *British* laws; and by the indulgent order of the Court of Directors, as hath already been shewn, he was not to be superseded without their express directions. Admitting then, that the Directors even possessed a right to withdraw their part of the express compact under which he went out to *India*, his right to trade, under the established legal-limitations, yet from the authorities already produced, it will evidently follow, that he could not be legally deprived of that right, nor superseded, unless for reasonable cause, and by the express order of thirteen or more of the *East India* Directors; with whom he had covenanted on behalf of the Company.

In consequence of his appointment, and under these conditions, the writer proceeded to *Bengal*, where, on his arrival, he first applied himself wholly to the acquisition of the *Bengal* dialect; which, though the most useful of any, either in matters of revenue or commerce in *Bengal*, yet being the speech of the inferior orders of people in that country, he found had been universally neglected by the servants of the Company, for the *Hindoostan*; a dialect introduced with mahomedanism, and which the superior natives, in their intercourses with the *Moguls*, their former, and the *Europeans*, their present masters, now mostly affect to speak.

Being successful in his endeavours, he was enabled, by this acquisition, to reap many benefits in his intercourse and dealings with the natives. He had likewise an advantage over many of the Company's servants, in having been regularly bred to business, almost from his childhood, in a merchant's accounting-house.



These advantages, with an habitual turn to sedulous application, were, in a short time after his arrival, the means of introducing him into a partnership, on equal terms, with Mr. *John Johnstone* and Mr. *William Hay*, two gentlemen of the Council at *Calcutta*: and the several employments to which he had been appointed, by the favour of the then * Governor and Council, requiring his continuance in *Calcutta*; he there, of course, became the acting partner in the affairs of *Johnstone, Hay, and Bolts*, at a time when the trade of *Bengal* flourished under a Nabob who was thought too independent. Indeed the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn* had much at heart the restraining of the trade of the Company and their servants; who were equally determined on supporting those immunities which they claimed as their rights, under the Firmaun of the Emperor *Furrukhsheer*; in which they had been encouraged by the † Directors,

* The Governor and Council had been pleased to entrust him, at one and the same time, with the different offices of Secretary, Accomptant, and Treasurer to the Committee of new lands, instituted by Mr. *Vansittart*; and when his partner, Mr. *Hay*, was sent with Mr. *Amyatt* on the deputation to *Mongheer*, he was further entrusted with Mr. *Hay's* department in that Committee, viz. the Collectorship of the province of *Máгурah*.

Copy of the 71st Paragraph of the Company's General Letter to *Bengal*. Dated the 9th of *March 1763*.

"From a view of the proceedings of the Committee of new lands, we have great reason to be satisfied with their close attention to this branch of the service. The manner of keeping those accounts is as we would have it; and your intention of following our directions, to let the lands in smaller lots, when the present leases expire, will, we flatter ourselves, contribute greatly to the increase of the revenues."

(Signed) *George Dudley,*
Tho. Waters,
Christ. Baron,
John Dorrien,
John Browne,
Henry Hadley,

G. Stevens,
John Mansbip,
Charles Gough,
Richard Seward,
F. W. Barrington,
Timothy Tullie,

Tho. Rous,
Richard Varner,
William Webber,
Robert Burrow,
Henry Savage,
William Thornton.

In the year 1761, even Mr. *Verelst* thought so favourably of the writer, that he wrote from *Chittigong* in the strongest terms in his favour, recommending him to be sent up in Council to that factory.

† Copy of the 66th and 67th Paragraphs of the Company's General Letter to *Bengal*. Dated the 25th of *March 1757*.

Par. 66. "It is with much concern we observe, in your detail of transactions with the country-government, that every circumstance and opportunity affords pretensions for exactions. It is impossible for us to mark out any precise rules for your conduct in general. We can only say, that you are to be zealous in preserving our Firmaun-rights and



tors, even to the giving of protection to the natives, for fear of subjecting the *English* flag to contempt.

It surely cannot be thought extraordinary, that a young man, just come into the country, should, on this subject, adopt the sentiments of all the oldest and most respectable servants of the Company; who were of opinion, that, by the terms of the *Firmaun*, the Company and their servants had a right to trade duty-free, in every article, without distinction of *inland-trade*, or foreign exportation. At a subsequent period, when this question was solemnly debated in Council, each member finally giving his opinion in writing, Messrs. * *Vanfittart* and *Hastings*, the Nabob's particular friends, gave the only two voices, out of twelve, against the freedom then decided to be a right.

It was, however, more a contest for power and independance than for the value of the duties, that influenced the conduct of the Nabob *Meer Cossim*, in all his disputes, at this period, with the Governor and Council. Besides, he had no confidence in any of the remaining members of the board at *Calcutta*, except Mr. *Vanfittart* and Mr. *Hastings*; who had been principally instrumental in raising him to the *Musnud*, and whose † private trade he protected.

and privileges; and when any sums of money are demanded, or any oppressions endeavoured to be laid on our trade, or otherwise, that you will obviate or settle them upon the best terms you can; in doing which our great dependance must be placed in your sense and care.

Par. 67. Among many other unreasonable demands, that made upon you for the *Cotmah's* effects is of a very pernicious nature, as it tends to *render our protection of no effect*, and subjecting the *English* flag to contempt. We find this affair was not brought to an issue upon the coming away of your last advices; but we hope your steadiness and resolution will disappoint *Hakeembeg* in his oppressive and lucrative views, and confirm the rich natives who reside in the Company's limits, that their persons and effects will be secure."

* Vide *Vanfittart's* Narrative, vol. II. pages 316 to 395.

† See the evidence given by *Stanlake Batson*, Esq; before the Select Committee of the Honourable House of Commons. Reports, vol. III. page 301.—"By one letter (of the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn's*) which fell into the hands of the *English*, it appeared, that the Nabob had ordered the man to whom it was addressed, to stop the *English* in their trade, all but his friends Messrs. *Vanfittart* and *Hastings*;—That the said letter ought to be upon the consultations; and he was sure that the words "all but my friends *Vanfittart* and *Hastings*," or to that purpose, were in the letter read at the board, and that the order was to stop the trade." See also the same Reports, page 342. Extract of the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn's* letter to *Mahommud Ally*, the *Naib* of *Dacca*.—"The Governor writes to me, that you interrupt his own gomastah. Notwithstanding, in the paper of regulations, there is no distinction of private or public, yet as the Governor is my friend, I accordingly write to you, not to impede the gomastah of his private trade, that may have with him either the Governor's or Company's dustuck."



Messrs. *Johnstone* and *Hay* having disapproved of the revolution in *Meer Cossim's* favour, and on many occasions taken a decisive part in Council against him, every possible * obstruction was artfully contrived to the prosecution of the business of their partnership. An inferior officer of the Nabob's, a Fowzdar in the province of *Purnea*, without any reasonable cause, had actually prohibited the inhabitants, under severe penalties, from buying, selling to, or having any dealings with the agents of *Johnstone*, *Hay*, and *Bolts*; which unwarrantable obstruction, in the month of *November* 1762, induced the partners to write a letter on the subject to that officer.

As the share which the writer had in that transaction appears to be one of Governor *Verelst's* most weighty accusations of him, in apology for his own indefensible conduct in the year 1768, it becomes necessary to lay the whole transaction before the public.

In the narration of these old affairs, the writer is unavoidably forced, by Mr. *Verelst*, more frequently than he could wish, to disturb the venerable ashes of the late Mr. *Vanfittart*, than whom, with all his faults (from which no man is exempt) the Company never had, nor probably ever will have, a less exceptionable Governor, or a more worthy man in their service.

Mr. *Vanfittart*, perhaps not less actuated by a jealousy too frequent between competitors in trade, than offended at all interference, by correspondence, with the officers of the Nabob's government, as an encroachment on what he deemed his own prerogative; complained greatly to the Council at *Calcutta* of this letter, written by the partners *Johnstone*, *Hay*, and *Bolts*, to the Fowzdar of *Purnea*. Mr. *Vanfittart's* complaint was as follows:

* See the evidence of General *John Carnac*, in the same Reports, page 302. "That those in the *English* administration, who were the friends of *Cossim Ally Khawn*, took great pains to have it represented, that what was called the *inland-trade* was the source of our disagreement with him, and were very industrious in proving that trade illegal." And again—"That the Nabob had been industriously taught to believe, that every *Englishman* who did not approve of the revolution was hostile to him, and from thence he had been guilty of several instances of disrespect to them."—How far the evidence here given may have been influenced by the recollection of old party-disputes, is left to the consideration of the reader. Candour however requires, that we should give him a caution thereon; and to guide his judgment in the matter, we recommend to his perusal a letter from Major *Carnac* to the President and Council at *Calcutta*, dated the 24th of *December* 1764, with Mr. *Vanfittart's* answer, as they stand on the consultations of the 11th *December* 1766; which are inserted in our Appendix, Letter A. Number III.

Extract.



*Extract of a Letter from Governor Vansittart to the Council at Calcutta.
Dated Mongheer, the 15th December 1762.*

* “ Inclosed I send for your perusal two *Persian* letters, delivered to me by the Nabob, with their translations. One from Mr. *Cartier* to *Mahommed Ally*, the Collector of the *Dacca* districts, which, if I understand right (for the expressions are rather obscure) is wrote in a very improper stile, and tends to encourage and promote those evils which we have taken so much pains to remedy, I mean a jealousy and mistrust between us and the Nabob. I request you will be pleased to call on Mr. *Cartier* for an explanation of his meaning, and give him such a caution on the occasion as to you shall seem necessary.

“ The other, from Messrs. *Johnstone*, *Hay*, and *Bolts* to *Sheer Ally Khawn*, Fowzdar of *Purnea*, indorsed by Mr. *Bolts* in *English*, and written I imagine by him, in the name of the partnership. Whoever reads this letter, must naturally conclude no other government subsisted amongst us, since it was left to Mr. *Bolts* to assert the privileges of the *Firmaun*, and vindicate, in the name of the *English*, the freedom of the Company’s dustuck. Such notions, if propagated in the country, must needs be prejudicial to the Company’s affairs, by weakening their government; and it is for this reason the Company have forbid letters to be written to the country-government by any person excepting the President, or with his approbation. I never refused to apply for redress for any grievance that the gentlemen in the service, and all other inhabitants of the settlement, have applied to me about; and in case of my illness, or absence, Mr. *Amvatt* was ready to give them the same assistance. I must therefore recommend to you to inflict such censure, or punishment on Mr. *Bolts*, as shall seem to you necessary, for preventing such irregularities in future. I could wish also, that it were made a rule for the chiefs of the subordinate factories, and all others, when they write letters to the country-government, to sign them, that, in case of their being produced afterwards, they may be known to be authentic.”

Mr. *Vansittart*’s translation of this offensive letter is as follows:

* See *Vansittart*’s Narrative, vol. II. page 145.



Translation of a Persian Letter from Messrs. Johnstone, Hay, and Bolts, to Meer Sheer Ally Khawn, Fowzdar of Purnea.

* “ Our gomastah, *Ramchurn-dafs*, being gone into those parts, meets with obstruction from you, in whatever business he undertakes; moreover, you have published a prohibition to this effect: That whoever shall have any dealings with the *English*, you will seize his house, and lay a fine upon him. In this manner you have prohibited the people under your jurisdiction. We were surprized at hearing of this affair, because the royal Firmaun, which the *English* nation is possessed of, is violated by this proceeding. But the *English* will by no means suffer, with patience, their Firmaun to be broke through; we therefore expect that, upon the receipt of this letter, you will take off the order you have given to the *Ryots*, and in case of your not doing it, we will certainly write to the Nabob, in the name of the *English*, and send for such orders from him, that you shall restore fully and entirely whatever loss the *English* have sustained, or shall sustain by this obstruction; and that you shall repent having thus interrupted our business in despite of the royal Firmaun. After reading this letter, we are persuaded you will desist from interrupting it, will act agreeably to the rules of friendship, and so that your amity may appear; and will by no means stop the Company’s dustuck.”

The writer’s justification in this transaction will appear from the following letter, wrote to the Council at *Calcutta*, and the proceedings of the board on that occasion.

† *Copy of a Letter from Messrs. John Johnstone and William Hay to the Council. Dated the 14th January 1763.*

“ We have received the copy of a letter, wrote by the President to the board, complaining of Mr. *Bolts*’s conduct in writing a letter in the name of Messrs. *Johnstone, Hay, and Bolts*, to the *Purnea Fowzdar*, representing the grievances and oppressions that our gomastahs met with, in transacting our business in that

* *Vanfittart’s Narrative*, vol. II. page 129. The reader will please to observe, that there was a more just and favourable translation of this letter made by Mr. *Gulston* the Company’s *Persian* translator, laid before the board; but we cannot exhibit it for want of a copy.

† *Vanfittart’s Narr.* vol. II. page 209.

“ country,



“ country, and asserting the privileges of the Firmaun ; and at the
 “ same time recommending to you, to inflict a censure, or punish-
 “ ment, on Mr. *Bolts* for the same. We therefore think it neces-
 “ sary, and our duty to inform you, gentlemen, that Mr. *Vanfit-*
 “ *tart*, when he cast the whole of that transaction on Mr. *Bolts*,
 “ did it not with any good reason, as we were both acquainted
 “ with the contents of that letter, and of its being sent ; and we
 “ cannot help thinking, from the terms of his letter, that it was
 “ wrote with no other design than to shew how blameable we were
 “ in his eyes, and how we ought to be treated : but we hope you,
 “ gentlemen, will judge otherwise. We are so far from thinking
 “ with the President, that it is criminal to assert the privilege
 “ of the Firmaun, that we think every one that does not, little
 “ deserves the benefit of it ; and that its being asserted in private
 “ letters, can never weaken the Company’s government, or prove
 “ prejudicial to their true interest.

“ The justness of our gomastah’s complaints, to which we refer,
 “ and which gave occasion to our letter to *Sheer Ally Khawn*, will
 “ appear by his answer ; in which he acknowledges, that, by the
 “ Nabob’s orders, our trade shall be entirely confined to that of
 “ ready-money purchases, contrary to the established customs
 “ throughout the country, and which must of consequence put a
 “ stop to all trade, or fetter it in a manner unknown before, in
 “ the worst of times in *Bengal*.

“ Our letter, as translated by Mr. *Gulston*, which we now lay
 “ before the board, we hope will appear unexceptionable ; for
 “ when it is said, in case we do not find an end was put to the
 “ oppressions which we complained of, that we would make ap-
 “ plication to the Nabob, for redress for ourselves and others, it is
 “ not to be imagined, that we should have procured this applica-
 “ tion to the Nabob otherwise than from your board ; and this
 “ was our intention. But Mr. *Vanfittart* is of a different opinion,
 “ and takes great exception at its being said to be done in the
 “ *English* name, and redress obtained for others. Had he thought
 “ proper to have mentioned it to either of the partners residing in
 “ *Calcutta*, he might have been satisfied, that there was no bad
 “ design in using the word others, but that it was introduced
 “ entirely by mistake ; and we have reason to think, Mr. *Vanfit-*
 “ *tart* was not unacquainted with the contents of that letter before
 “ he left *Calcutta*, as our gomastah wrote us, after the receipt of
 “ the letter, the Fowzdar would not send us his answer till it was
 “ approved.



“ approved of by the President, for which purpose it was sent by
 “ the Fowzdar, with one of his own, to *Calcutta*; and we did
 “ not receive the answer till some days after Mr. *Vanfittart*’s de-
 “ parture from *Calcutta*.

“ The unwillingness the President had to believe complaints of
 “ this nature, and more particularly that they were owing to the
 “ Nabob’s orders, induced us to address *Sheer Ally Khawn* in the
 “ manner we did, to see whether he would answer us, as he did
 “ our gomastah; and on this to have a foundation for applying to
 “ your honourable board for redress. You will please to remark,
 “ that *Sheer Ally Khawn* represents *dadney* advanced for goods, as
 “ money lent out at interest, which latter business our gomastahs
 “ never carried on; and we cannot conceive, that the misbeha-
 “ viour of a few gomastahs, in that, or any other way, when
 “ proved, joined to the many groundless complaints of the go-
 “ vernment, should be esteemed sufficient cause for the Nabob to
 “ usurp, or we to give up the privileges of the *English* Company
 “ in this country; when, at the same time, so many well-ground-
 “ ed causes of complaint have been given by the servants of the
 “ Nabob, to those who, by the Company’s indulgence, have the
 “ privilege of dustucks (and of course are exempt from all duties)
 “ and their protection. That these privileges, for several months,
 “ have been greatly infringed in some parts, and entirely taken
 “ away in others, by the country-government, is what we, as well
 “ as most *English* traders, *except the President*, have severely felt in
 “ our private fortunes.

“ We have received a letter from our agent, Mr. *Robinson* at
 “ *Gualparah*, informing us of the difficulties he laboured under,
 “ from the obstacles thrown in the way of our trade, and the dan-
 “ ger with which he was threatened by the Fowzdar of *Ranga-*
 “ *matty*, which he represented as greatly fomented and increased
 “ by the arrival and practices of one *Gongaram Metre*, who was
 “ come there in *August*, and assumed to himself, on the strength
 “ of his perwânah from the Governor, the office of inquisitor and
 “ supervisor of the agents of the *English*, &c. in those parts. The
 “ perwânah, extracts of Mr. *Robinson*’s letter, *Gongaram Metre*’s
 “ letter to Mr. *Teixeira*, and the letter from the *Rangamatty* Fowz-
 “ dar to Mr. *Robinson*, are submitted to your consideration. Some
 “ of these were forwarded to the Governor, requesting the neces-
 “ sary redress; in answer, we have received, through him, a per-
 “ wânah from the Nabob to the Fowzdar of *Rangamatty*, as per



“ subjoined translation, directing him not to obstruct our trade, or
 “ collect duties on goods provided for exportation, or that come
 “ from *Calcutta* with a duty, but to levy the usual duties on
 “ other goods, and to send to himself and the President, an ac-
 “ count of the rates according to which they pay. This, we
 “ humbly conceive, is contrary to the articles of our treaty with
 “ the Nabob, and reduces us again to those privileges we enjoyed
 “ before the time of *Meer Jassier Khawn*, and which we imagine
 “ was not the sentiments of the majority of the board at the time
 “ the President left it. By this *perwānah*, however, we have not
 “ got the least satisfaction for the insults and losses we have suf-
 “ fered, by obstructing our trade, both inland and *Calcutta*; but,
 “ on the contrary, it is left to the Fowzdar’s direction, who has
 “ been guilty of the violences and losses we complained of, to fix
 “ the rates of the duties on the different articles of inland-trade, on
 “ which, to the best of our knowledge, the Company’s servants
 “ that have traded there since the treaty with *Jassier Ally Khawn*,
 “ never yet paid any, and of course there could be no custom to
 “ follow. This scheme, should it take place, would reduce us
 “ to a footing with (if not below) the traders of the country, as
 “ is the wish of the Governor’s agent in that part, probably in the
 “ imagination, that this may be a means of throwing the whole
 “ trade into their hands, by the extraordinary interest Mr. *Vanfit-*
 “ *tart* has with the Nabob.

“ Whatever opinion the President may entertain of Mr. *Cartier*,
 “ or Mr. * *Chevalier*, they have had the happiness hitherto to be
 “ esteemed by every body that knows them. The gentleman we
 “ sent up, Mr. *Robinson*, had the permission and approbation of
 “ the board; we think, therefore, if such grievances as were
 “ alleged against *English* agents and gomastahs, really existed in
 “ those parts, the subjecting them to the scrutiny and supervisal of
 “ black dependants, of whatever denomination, without the know-
 “ ledge of the board, was an indignity offered to it, to us, and to
 “ every gentleman concerned; and, however the propagating of
 “ such notions in this country may serve to strengthen the hands
 “ of the government, we humbly conceive it can give but a very
 “ odd opinion of the other members to whom it is jointly en-
 “ trusted.

* Mons. *Chevalier* had been agent at *Gualparah*, to whom Mr. *Robinson* succeeded. That gentleman has for some years since been Governor of the *French* settlements in *Bengal*.



“ In the course of the business we have carried on, we have
 “ met with the greatest impediments in almost all parts, but in par-
 “ ticular in *Purnea, Rungpoor*, and the districts of *Gualparah* and
 “ *Rangamatty*, from the different Fowzdars, Zemindars, Mr.
 “ * *Moore, Gongaram Metre, &c.* the accounts of which, as we
 “ have received them from our agents, we now lay before you,
 “ and hope you will procure for us that satisfaction and redress
 “ which we have hitherto been unable to obtain.”

At a Consultation held the 17th of *January* 1763.

† “ Messrs. *Johnstone* and *Hay* send in a letter to the board,
 “ regarding the *Persian* letter which they wrote to *Sheer Ally*
 “ *Khawon*, the Fowzdar of *Purnea*, also copies and extracts of sun-
 “ dry letters and papers relative thereto.

“ The same being now read, the board are of opinion, that they
 “ sufficiently account for, and vindicate those gentlemen in that trans-
 “ action.”

Upon this decision of the Council on the subject of this letter,
 Mr. *Vanfittart*, at a Consultation held on the 1st *February* 1763,
 entered a long minute, wherein he concludes the subject in the
 following words :

† “ As you have been pleased to give it as your opinion, that
 “ Messrs. *Johnstone, Hay*, and *Bolts*, did properly in writing a letter
 “ to *Sheer Ally*, the Fowzdar of *Purnea*, in their own name, instead
 “ of applying to the President, of course, every other merchant
 “ will take the same authority.

“ I am by no means sorry to be relieved from the trouble of
 “ such applications ; yet I think it my duty to give it as my opi-
 “ nion, that this entire *levelling and equality* will not be for the
 “ good of the Company's affairs, nor the benefit of society, and
 “ therefore to declare my disapprobation.

“ One reason Messrs. *Johnstone* and *Hay* give for writing this let-
 “ ter deserves to be taken notice of, *an unwillingness in the President*
 “ *to believe complaints of this nature.* I request the board will call
 “ on them, to produce any one instance where I have either re-
 “ fused or delayed to give them, or any other merchant, every
 “ assistance they have asked of me, in the carrying on of their pri-

* An agent of Mr. *Vanfittart's*.

† *Vanfittart's Narrative*, vol. II, page 232.

‡ Ibid. page 250.



“ vate business, or in obtaining redress for their grievances. In
 “ short, gentlemen, their letter throughout is so injurious to me as
 “ a gentleman, to say nothing of my station, that I should apply
 “ to you for justice against them, did I not perceive, that instead
 “ of shewing your displeasure at such behaviour, *you have thought*
 “ *proper to give it the sanction of your approbation.* I refer, there-
 “ fore, to the honourable the Court of Directors, who, I am per-
 “ suaded, will do me justice.”

Mr. *Vanfittart*'s interest, at this time, with the *leading Directors* in *England*, was superior to that of the whole Council in *Bengal*. And although, at a subsequent period, the Court were as ready to condemn Mr. *Vanfittart*'s conduct on any point, yet, upon that occasion, his reference of the above matter to *England*, procured against the writer, the reprimand referred to by Mr. *Verelst*, from the same Court of Directors, who also entirely approved of the resolution in favour of *Meer Cossim Ally Khawn*, and recommended to their servants in * *Bengal*, not to restore *Meer Jaffier*, on account of his “ incapacity, cruelty, and perfidy,” thereby giving Mr. *Vanfittart* a complete victory.

The paragraph of the general letter of the 8th *February* 1764, wherein the writer was thus reprimanded, was as follows:

Par. VII. “ The conduct and behaviour of Mr. *William Bolts*,
 “ a factor, falling next under our consideration, they appear, so
 “ far as he was connected with Messrs. *Johnstone* and *Hay*, to be
 “ very improper; especially in joining with them in an audacious
 “ and impertinent letter to the Fowzdar of *Purnea*, as it stands
 “ on your consultations of the 27th *December* 1762, and for which
 “ the President recommended it to the Council to pass some cen-
 “ sure upon him. He appears, likewise, to have been *guilty of*
 “ *irregular practices, in respect to carrying on his private trade*: let
 “ him be called into Council, and reprimanded according to his
 “ deserts; and inform him, if his conduct is not more satisfactory
 “ for the future, we shall dismiss him from the service.”

The only matter upon record, before the Directors, against the writer, was what Mr. *Vanfittart* had said on the subject of the letter written by *Johnstone*, *Hay*, and *Bolts* to the Fowzdar of *Purnea*; upon which, notwithstanding the writer's justification by the Council of *Calcutta*, yet, as a servant of the Company, the Directors

* See a letter from the Directors to Mr. *Vanfittart*; dated the 9th *February* 1764.
 Appendix A. Number VI.



might think themselves at liberty to pronounce any sentence they pleased against him.

But there was not even the shadow of a single fact or circumstance, before the Court, to authorize the injurious reflection, that the writer “had been guilty of irregular practices in carrying on “his private trade.”

And though we may give a latitude to Directors, to pronounce, in their directorial capacities, any sentence, or opinion whatever, upon the conduct of their servants, however irregular, unjust, or against their own conviction, yet decency, if not a regard for the dignity and duties of their stations, should have taught them to refrain from publicly setting their hands to an assertion that was totally void of truth.

After the restoration of *Meer Jaffier Ally Khawn*, a perfect harmony subsisted in the Council at *Calcutta*, and when the letter from the Court of Directors, of the 8th *February* 1764, was received in *Bengal*, the writer was *never called before the Council, or reprimanded*. It is hard to say, whether that part of the ceremony was dispensed with by Mr. *Vanfittart*, from a disinclination to revive unexisting animosities, or from the shame which his ingenuous mind might then feel for the weak conduct of the Directors. But indeed, at that time, the writer had the happiness of being on a very friendly footing, not only with the Governor, but likewise with every member of the Council, who not long afterwards did him the justice to appoint him, according to his rank in the service, to a station of trust and honour.

• It must here be remarked, that at this time, all the superior servants of the Company * corresponded with the Nabob’s officers, on their own business, or matters of compliment, whenever they thought proper; nor could that be deemed criminal, so long as they refrained from interfering with the politics of the country, to the prejudice of the Company. Upon the whole then of this first † charge of Mr. *Verelst*’s, it must incontestibly appear, that if the writer, when a young man, and of short standing in the service, did join with his partners in writing the letter in question, to an inferior officer under the *Indian* government, it was in support of

* In the course of this work, the reader will be shown the pernicious consequences resulting to the Company’s affairs, from the absurd custom of confining all correspondence with the officers of the black government, on any subject whatever, to the President of *Calcutta* only.

† *Verelst*’s View, &c. page 5.



what he had always been made to consider as the stipulated right of the Company and its servants, and was in fact, in the then state of *Bengal*, no more criminal than a merchant in this country writing to check a custom-house officer who had exceeded his duty. But the reader will have perceived, that this affair, otherwise very trivial in its nature, was made a handle of, more as a convenient matter of dispute between contending parties, than any real offence in the writer; who, after all, stood fully vindicated by his superiors, for the small share he had in this transaction. Judge then, reader, of the candour and veracity of Mr. *Verelst*, when, upon such facts, he makes the following reflection: * “Among the *private persons* “who usurped the office of their superiors, Mr. *Bolts* was very “early distinguished, who wrote, *in his own name*, to the Fowzdar “of *Purnea*, threatening the Nabob’s officers with the effect of “the *English* power,” and who, in a note upon this transaction of the year 1762, has also the confidence to assert before the public, that † “one of the many reasons for Mr. *Bolts*’s being sent to *England*, “though very low in the service, was his arrogating to himself “this established authority of a Governor,” although the writer was not forcibly sent to *England* until six years after this transaction, in consequence of a resolution ‡ taken on the 5th *November* 1767, by the Board of Council, at which this same Mr. *Verelst* presided as Governor.

* *Verelst*’s View, &c. page 38.

† Ibid. page 39.

‡ Appendix F. page 478.



CHAP. II.

FURTHER REFUTATIONS of MR. VERELST'S
Publication; and ACCOUNTS of PROCEEDINGS
both in EUROPE and ASIA: with REMARKS thereon.

TOWARDS the conclusion of the Company's war with the Nabob of Owd, *Sujah al Dowlah*, in the year 1764, Governor *Vanfittart* and his Council reserved, from among the conquered provinces, the Zemindary of the *Rajah Bulwantsing* to the government of the Company, and established a factory at *Banâras*, the capital city thereof. To this new settlement they appointed a Chief and Council, for the purposes of collecting the revenues, extending the sales of woollens and other *British* commodities imported by the Company, as well as for other political reasons, which in the then state of the Company's affairs concurred for rendering that establishment a wise and judicious measure.

The Governor and Council of *Bengal*, during Mr. *Vanfittart*'s government, had, on all occasions, been very attentive to the preservation of regular succession to employments of honour and emolument in the Company's service, ever avoiding, as much as possible, all injurious supercessions in preferment; and so regardful were they, at that time, of the rights of regular advancement in the service, that no post was given to a junior servant, till his superior had, by the tacit permission of the board, declined the acceptance of it. According to this rule of conduct, when those appointments to *Banâras* were under consideration at the board, the writer was required to declare, whether he chose going to *Banâras* as second in Council, or to *Burdwan*. On his acceptance of the former, he was accordingly appointed second, under Mr. *Randolph Marriott*, chief, with Mr. *John Graham* third in Council, and Mr. *William Marriott*, a writer, as assistant, at this new-established factory.

The Company having been greatly alarmed in *England*, on receiving news of war being commenced with the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn*, had, in the month of *May* 1764, appointed the Right Honourable *Robert Lord Clive* President, or Governor, with Mr. *William Brightwell Sumner*, Brigadier General *John Carnac*, Messrs. *Harry*



Harry Verelst and *Francis Sykes*, a Select Committee, for the restoration and establishment of peace and tranquillity in *Bengal*. And in order more effectually to attain such desirable ends, they were pleased to give the noble Lord, and his Committee, full * powers to pursue whatever means they should think proper; with instructions, however, to consult the Council at large in all cases, where it could be done conveniently, although the power of finally determining was to remain with that Committee.

At the time when this extraordinary and unconstitutional appointment was made, there were not wanting, among the proprietors of *East India* stock, men who foresaw the evils that were likely to result from it, and who thought it their duty to † forewarn the Directors thereof. Their prophetic representations had then, however, no effect; although events have since so far verified, nay surpassed what they wisely foretold, that it would now be difficult to find one unprejudiced and well informed *East India* proprietor who will not *feelingly* assent to our opinion; that to the injudicious appointment of that Select Committee are to be originally ascribed all the evils that have since befallen the Company.

When the noble Lord with his Committee-men arrived in *India*; they found ‡ “ *the Company’s affairs in a very flourishing condition; Sujah al Dowlah beat from his dominions, and it was scarcely hyperbole to say, to-morrow the whole Mogul Empire is in our power.*” Indeed peace and tranquillity had been perfectly re-established in *Bengal*, and the Company’s business was carried on with all becoming unanimity, while the foundations were laying of a flourishing and daily-increasing inland-commerce, on which *alone* the prosperity of *Bengal* always did, and ever must depend.

But on the single fact of presents having been received from § *Najim al Dowlah* by the gentlemen of the deputation from the Council at *Calcutta*, who placed that Nabob on the *Musnud* in *Fe-*

* See Appendix A. Number VIII. page 24.

† See a memorial from *George Johnstone* and *George Dempster*, Esquires, to the Court of *East India* Directors; dated the 30th *May* 1764. Appendix A. Number VII. page 22.

‡ See a letter from Lord *Clive* to *Thomas Rous*, Esq; dated *Madras* the 17th *April* 1765. Appendix A. page 33.

§ It may not be improper here, to refer the reader to a general statement of the presents received by individuals in *Bengal* from their first making of Nabobs to the year 1766, as far as hath come to public knowledge, taken from a Report of the Select Committee of the Honourable House of Commons made in 1773. Vide Appendix A. Number XII.



bruary 1765, Lord Clive discovered, while at *Madras*, that he had “an * *Augean stable to cleanse*” in *Bengal*. And after the arrival of his Lordship, with Messrs. *Sumner* and *Sykes*, at *Calcutta*, on the 3d of May 1765, so very rapid was their progress in inquiry, that within three days they acquired a complete knowledge of the state of the country; and proceeding, under oaths of secrecy to each other, they found, in every department of public affairs, nothing but anarchy, confusion, and † corruption. They thereupon immediately entered

• Appendix, pages 34 and 35.

† “ At a Select Committee held the 7th of May 1765.

Present, The Right Honourable *Robert* Lord *Clive*, President,
William. Brightwell Sumner, Esq; and
Francis Sykes, Esq;

“ *Resolved*, that the following oath be taken by the several members of the Select Committee:

“ I *A. B.* do swear, that I will not reveal to any person whatever, any of the proceedings of this Committee, until the same be laid before the Council, or until this Committee be dissolved.

“ *Agreed*, That Mr. *Alexander Campbell* be appointed Secretary, Mr. *Edward Baber* Sub-secretary, and Mr. *William Rook* Assistant to the Committee; and that the following oath of secrecy be administered to them:

“ I *A. B.* do swear to be true and faithful to the trust reposed in me by the Secret Committee, and to reveal to no person whatever, the proceedings of that department, until the same are laid before the Council.”

Extract from Lord Clive's Letter to the Select Committee.

“ My successor, soon after my departure, thought proper to raise *Cossim Ally Khawn* to the Subahship, doubtless, because he thought such a step necessary. The consequences, however, from whatever cause, were unfortunate; but let us draw a veil over those distant transactions.—Let us consider only the present state of politics and commerce, and let our whole attention be employed in establishing the Company's affairs upon a firm and lasting foundation. Nor do I in the least despair of seeing this important business accomplished, since I have the peculiar happiness of finding myself assisted by a Committee of known abilities and incorruptible integrity. If at any time we should happen to differ in opinion, we shall differ like gentlemen, with temper and cool reasoning. The minutes of our consultations will not, I trust, be prolonged by dissention, and disgraced with the prejudices of faction; we will endeavour to be unanimous.

“ A very few days are elapsed since our arrival, and yet if we consider what has already come to our knowledge, we cannot hesitate a moment upon the necessity of assuming the power that is in us, of conducting, as a Select Committee, the affairs, both civil and military, of this settlement. What do we hear of, what do we see, but anarchy, confusion, and what is worse, an almost general CORRUPTION? To remedy, or at least to prevent these evils in future, is a duty incumbent on this Committee; a duty which we owe to that Company we have engaged to serve, and a duty which we owe



entered on the very important business of their extraordinary mission, and resolved to abolish all the treaties and agreements that

owe to ourselves, if the pleas of honour, reputation, and conscience are worthy our attention. Happy I am sure you would have been, as well as myself, had the late conduct of affairs been so irreproachable as to have permitted them to continue in the hands of the Governor and Council. A very transient view, however, of what has passed since *Meer Jaffer's* death, will convince us, that the great point of reformation we aim at, cannot be obtained through that channel. The Committee therefore, in my opinion, must immediately act; a measure so necessary, that I conclude you can have no objection to it. For my own part I will venture to assert, that the critical situation of the Company renders it absolutely indispensable, for the speedy settling of their affairs, that the power should be vested in the hands of a few; and give me leave further to add, that unless the spirit of their orders in that respect be pursued, it is but too evident, that the general sense of the proprietors, when they honoured me with their solicitation to accept of this government, will be baffled and delayed, if not totally eluded by their servants.

“ To establish a *country-government*, to secure the commercial interest, and to perpetuate the revenues of the Company; to form the military, and to amend the civil department, these will be the objects of our serious attention. By this Committee I shall hope to see these important matters completely regulated, before I resign the government, and you know that my intention is to remain in it no longer than my assistance may be thought necessary towards accomplishing these great and salutary purposes.

“ I shall now only repeat what you have often heard me declare, that I totally disclaim any emolument to myself.—I will not add to my fortune one single rupee by the opportunities I might have, as Governor. On the other hand, be assured, that every advantage to others, consistent with my ideas of the Company's honour and interest, shall be promoted to the utmost of my power here, and influence at home.

(Signed) CLIVE.”

“ To this letter, from the Right Honourable the President, Messrs. *Sumner* and *Sykes* agreed to deliver in an answer at the next meeting of the Committee.”

“ At a Select Committee held the 11th May 1765,
Present, The Right Honourable Lord *Clive*, President,
William Brightwell Sumner, and
Francis Sykes, Esquires.

“ To the Right Honourable *Robert* Lord *Clive*, President of the Select Committee.

“ MY LORD,

“ The situation of the Company's affairs which you have described, and the measures proposed by your Lordship for retrieving them, are perfectly agreeable to our sentiments. We are sensible of the difficulty of establishing order and tranquillity where anarchy and confusion have so long prevailed; but the experience we have of your Lordship's great abilities, the steadiness with which we have seen you encounter danger and difficulty, and the regard we are sensible you have for your own honour and the interest of the Company, encourage us to hope for the most fortunate issue to the proceedings of the Select Committee.

D

“ The



that had been solemnly entered into but a short time before, with the Prince *Shah Allum*, the Rajah *Bulwantfing*, and the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah*; with assuming to themselves the entire administration of all affairs, civil, judicial, commercial, and political; annulling the legal powers of the general Council, and rendering its members mere * cyphers.

The

“ The sentiments which your Lordship is pleased to entertain of our attachment to you, and to the interests of our Employers, are just. We will, my Lord, express ourselves with freedom on every subject that regards the Public; but we can never be wanting in temper and decency where we entertain so much respect. We are urged, my Lord, by *the most powerful motives* to that unanimity which you recommend. The present unhappy situation of the Company's affairs arises more from the dissensions than the incapacity of those gentlemen into whose hands your Lordship resigned the government. It will be our ambition to approve ourselves deserving of the trust reposed in us by the Company, to assist your Lordship with our utmost abilities to fulfil the hopes conceived from your prudence and capacity, and to enable you to return, as you ardently wish, to your native country, with the satisfaction of having baffled the malice of faction, rendered commerce flourishing, and peace permanent; and the peculiar honour of raising the Company's affairs in *Bengal*, a second time, from that desperate state into which they were sunk through the luxury and corruption that prevailed among their servants.

We have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient
and most humble servants,

(Signed) W. BRIGHTWELL SUMNER,
FRANCIS SYKES.”

Fort William,
the 8th May 1765.

* Mr. *Verelst*, when a Member of this Committee, made no objection to the annulling of the treaties which existed in 1765, when Lord *Clive* arrived, without consulting the Council. But his opinion was different in the year 1760, upon the revolution in favour of *Meer Cossim*, when he himself was a Member of the Council, and not consulted by the Select Committee. See his opinion, as recorded in the following proceedings.

Fort William, the 8th November 1760.

At a Consultation, present,

The Honourable *Henry Vansittart*, Esq; President,
William Ellis,
William Brightwell Sumner,
Harry Verelst,
Harry Smyth,
Samuel Waller, and
Culling Smith, Esquires.

Mr. *Macgwire* indisposed.

“ Mr. *Verelst* begs leave to observe, that the board have been kept, till now, intirely
“ ignorant of the proceedings of the Select Committee relating to the present revolution,
“ and their motives for it; he therefore cannot pretend to judge how far such a step was
“ necessary; but thinks, that in an affair of such immediate consequence to the Com-
pany's



The late establishment at *Banaras*, which had but just been determined on by a former Governor and Council, as expedient and beneficial for the Company's affairs, was soon judged, by the new comers, to be neither necessary or serviceable: and they accordingly resolved to withdraw the factory, without the examination or proof

“ pany's estate in these parts, the most mature consideration of *the whole board* should
 “ have been first had;—that a treaty, executed in the most solemn manner, subsisted be-
 “ tween *Meer Jaffier* and us; the most faithful adherence to which, as well as all other
 “ our engagements, has preserved that influence and power we have maintained ever since
 “ the recapture of *Calcutta*; a steadiness to which treaty made the *British* admired, nay
 “ even courted, by every Prince throughout these provinces, and has ever been *fatal to*
 “ *the Prince apparent of the Empire, and many other disturbers*, who have hitherto weakly
 “ endeavoured to engage us to break through those solemn ties we were sworn to. As
 “ this sudden change must alarm every one, to find us so unexpectedly breaking through
 “ all our engagements, which were so public, reputable, and to the honour of the nation,
 “ he cannot be blamed, as a member of this board, for expressing his dissatisfaction, at
 “ being made a *cypher* of in so critical a concern.” See Journals of the House of Com-
 mons, Vol. XXXIII. Page 886.

Without examining into the merits of the plea for secrecy, upon Mr. *Vanfittart's* revolution, it may be safely asserted, such was the situation of the country-powers in the year 1765, that no good argument whatever can be adduced to prove a necessity for confining the alterations then made to a Secret Committee.

The reasons, however, of the noble President, for transferring all power from the Council to the Secret Committee, may be seen by the following

Extract from Lord Clive's Minute, at a Consultation held the 24th June 1765.

“ When the General Court of Proprietors did me the honour to request my acceptance
 “ of this government, their affairs here seemed to be in a critical and dangerous situation.
 “ The measures I determined to adopt were such as, from long experience, I knew to be
 “ essentially necessary for the true interest of the Company. But I also knew, that dis-
 “ sensions in Council had often frustrated the most salutary purposes, and that *if I had*
 “ *consented to sit in this chair, possessing the authority of government equally with fifteen*
 “ *other gentlemen*, the Company would have soon found themselves disappointed in the
 “ hopes they were pleased to entertain of my abilities to render them service: nor could
 “ it be expected that I should sacrifice my health, forsake my family, and hazard my for-
 “ tune, to accept of a situation in which *I could neither acquire honour to myself, nor fulfil*
 “ *the wishes of the Company. A select disinterested Committee, such as I now have the*
 “ *happiness of being joined with*, was, I thought, the proper medium between absolute
 “ power vested in a single person, and *dispersed* in the hands of a whole board. It may
 “ be remembered, that powers equally strong and extensive were given to Mr. *Vanfittart*
 “ alone, and in case of his death, or absence, to Mr. *Spencer* and four other gentlemen.—
 “ Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Sumner*, General *Carnac*, Messrs. *Verelst* and *Sykes*, are they less to be
 “ trusted than those?

“ The state in which I found the civil and military affairs of the Presidency, upon my
 “ arrival, sufficiently convinced me, that had not the power been lodged in the hands of
 “ a few, inevitable ruin would have soon been the fate of *Bengal*. Whether the power
 “ of government is exercised with less abilities, integrity, and disinterestedness by the pre-
 “ sent, than it was by the late possessors of each, time will determine.”



of any fact, and without any information taken of the value of the object they were about to give * up for ever. In short, at almost every factory, and in every department, the whole system of the Company's business was so suddenly obstructed, subverted, or changed, that the Natives saw, with equal surprize and contempt, that there was no stability in the measures of the Company, nor any dependance to be made on their public treaties.

His Lordship and the Secret Committee suddenly discovered, that *Calcutta* was in as bad a state as *Sodom* or *Gomorrhah* of old: that throughout *Bengal*, such was the general corruption of the servants of the Company, that nothing could be met with, among them, but “immorality, dissipation, luxury, rapacity, and venality;” and that “the settlement, conducted as it was, could not have subsisted † another twelvemonth.” They farther discovered, that there were none holy to be found, to save this *Gomorrhah* from impending destruction, except their own Committee of select and disinterested men.

Such was the general purport of all the representations sent home at this period, to the Court of *East India* Directors, by the noble Lord and his Committee; who, from being enabled, by the secrecy of their proceedings and correspondence, to give what colour they pleased to every public transaction and every private character, became, in fact, the framers of the opinions of their constituents, thereby obtaining from their credulity too many confirmations of those fulsome compliments which they were continually recording in approbation and praise of one another.

But in fact, on this Committee's first assembling at *Calcutta*, they found, as hath been before observed, the objects of their mission already accomplished. The country was in peace; trade on a flourishing footing, both internal and external, as well among *Europeans* as the Natives; the revenues were in a state of improvement, and every thing agreeable to what the noble Lord *Clive* had heard and been convinced of on his way, when he wrote from *Madras* to his agents in *London*, to raise money for him by every means they could, and ‡ in-

* The Company were afterwards so well convinced of the bad policy of giving up the zemindary of *Bulwantsing*, that in the year 1771 they were very anxious to regain it, in exchange for the provinces of *Korah* and *Illahabad*. See Appendix, A, page 257.

† See Lord *Clive*'s letter to the Directors, of the 30th *September* 1765, Reports of the Honourable House of Commons, vol. III. page 391; also his Lordship's letter to Sir *Joseph Yorke*, Appendix, A. Num. XI. page 40.

‡ See Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 313. See also a copy of the evidence at large, as taken upon this transaction before a Committee of the House, Appendix, A, Num. X. pages 28 to 39.



vest it in INDIA STOCK. The regular and gradual improvement of the revenues, from the situation in which they found the country; the progressive melioration and extension of commerce; a legal inquiry into such past abuses as had existed, and an equitable establishment of regulations for future reformation, where requisite, were works that required more time and attention than the Committee-gentlemen discovered an inclination to employ in *India*: and nothing, therefore, remained for them to do, in the great outlines of government, from which honour or emolument could be reaped, however unjustly but upon such a new and chimerical system of government, as being neither to be defined or understood, should best serve their secret purposes.

The professions of the Secret Committee, therefore, of their own disinterestedness and abhorrence of the rapid acquisition of wealth; their affected accusations of the Company's servants in general, with their repeated representations of the strong necessity there was for immediately accomplishing a thorough reformation, were no less injurious to the whole body, than systematically calculated to impose on the Public and such Directors as were not in the secret, by turning their attention at home towards objects of no importance, as the great ends of pursuit from their mission; while they, the select men, built their own reputations upon the services, and their fortunes upon the ruin, of their fellow-servants.

The lawful profits to be acquired by a fair trade, when added to the licit emoluments of office, were deemed too scanty and precarious for rewarding the merits of this confederacy of reformers, which gave occasion for the establishment of the various commercial associations taken notice of in the first part of *Considerations, &c.* and which it is necessary in this place briefly to recapitulate.

The first was the private monopoly, in * partnership, which commenced in the beginning of *June* 1765, between Lord *Clive*, Messieurs *Sumner*, *Sykes*, and *Verelst*, each one quarter part, for purchasing large quantities of salt, then in the hands of private merchants: and in *August* 1765, the monopoly of inland-trade, in salt, beetle-nut, and tobacco, was established; which had been planned by his † Lordship during his voyage to *India*, and was afterwards adopted, because, as the noble President and Select Committee

* See the evidence of Messrs. *Verelst*, *Sumner*, and *Sykes*, Reports, vol. III. pages 462 and 463.

† See Lord *Clive*'s letter of the 1st *February* 1766. Ibid. page 472.



expressed themselves, they * “*found, that to remove the INCONVENIENCIES of a free trade, it was necessary to vest the whole in an exclusive Company.*—On this establishment it is to be remarked, that not only the drones and bees were all put on the same footing, but his Lordship and the Select Committee-men took care likewise to *select* and appropriate large shares to themselves.

In farther pursuit of the system of reformation adopted by the Committee, all gradation of rank to posts of honour or emolument in the service was entirely broken through, on the pretence, as we must suppose, of want of integrity; for that a regard to capacity was out of the question may with certainty be inferred from a number of promotions that were then made, and even some to the highest stations. In fact, every preferment was made from faction, private interest, or mere personal attachment. From the supposed want of honest and capable men in *Bengal*, four † gentlemen, quite raw and unexperienced in the affairs of *Bengal*, and totally unacquainted with the country-languages, were brought from *Madras*, and taken into Council; and Mr. *Alexander Campbell*, a gentleman related to the Chairman of the Court of Directors, was also promoted to a seat at the board, to the great injury and universal disgust of the Company's servants, notwithstanding a solemn declaration of the Court that he was not to rise above the rank of his first appointment.

Another *disinterested* combination, which had been engaged in, about this period, by the gentlemen of Council, was that of engrossing the importation of cotton from the coast of *Malabar*. The extent of their engagement in this *meritorious* business was to the amount of about *three hundred thousand pounds sterling*, which was divided into shares, Mr. *Sumner* holding two-eighths, and the rest between Messrs. *Verelst*, *Watts*, *Russell*, *Kelsall*, *Ffloyer*, and *Aldersey*.

* See the 32d paragraph of a letter from the Select Committee at *Bengal* of the 30th September 1765, which was signed by Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Sumner*, General *Carnac*, Mr. *Verelst*, and Mr. *Sykes*. Reports, vol. IV. page 183.

† Messrs. *Claud Russell*, *William Aldersey*, *Thomas Kelsall*, and *Charles Ffloyer*. The reasons for and against those promotions are contained in the following Numbers of our Appendix, under the Letter A, viz.

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Num. XIII. | The proceedings of the Select Committee of the 5th Nov. 1765, | Page 41. |
| XIV. | Ditto of the 20th January 1766, | Ibid. 44. |
| | The memorial of the Company's servants at <i>Bengal</i> , | Ibid. 48. |
| XV. | A letter from Mr. <i>George Gustavus Ducarel</i> , | Ibid. 51. |
| XVII. | Lord <i>Clive</i> 's letter of the 20th March 1766, | Ibid. 120. |
| XXIV. | Ditto of the 12th December 1766, | Ibid. 141. |



On the merits of these engagements it may be alleged, with the greatest truth, that, to a trading and manufacturing community, no practices can be equally ruinous with those of monopolizing the necessaries of life and the raw materials for trade or navigation. Yet such were the boasted merits of the self-praising and self-denying reformers arrived from *England* and from *Madras*, who pretended in *Bengal* to check rapine, amend abuses, and restore order by their own good example.

So far it is hoped this digression will be allowed as necessary for giving information to the reader of the state of the Company's service at that time in *Bengal*, as connected with the writer's case; to which we now return. But it much grieves the narrator, that he is here again, in his vindication, compelled to open such old sores afresh, as he has long wished for ever healed.

As soon as the appointments to *Banâras* were adjusted, in order to promote unanimity in that infant-settlement, the parties agreed, before they left *Calcutta*, by articles which they entered into on the 21st *November* 1764, that all legal advantages derived from their stations should be divided amongst them, in settled proportions, according to the estimated difference of their respective ranks in the Company's service, *viz.*

To the Chief, *Randolph Marriott*, Esq;
the second in Council, *William Bolts*,
the third, Mr. *John Graham*,
the Assistant, Mr. *William Marriott*,

$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{1}{3} \frac{3}{2} \\ \frac{2}{3} \frac{2}{2} \\ \frac{1}{3} \frac{1}{2} \\ \frac{3}{3} \frac{3}{2} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

32

And it was provided expressly in their agreement, “ that in case the
“ President and Council of *Fort William* should invest the Chief with
“ powers independent of his Council, for him alone to negotiate a
“ treaty, or transact business with *Sujah al Dowlah*, or any other of
“ the country-powers, the advantages which might accrue from the
“ execution of such orders, should be his sole property; but other-
“ wise, that all advantages should come under the terms of this
“ agreement.”

The stipulations on behalf of the Company, with the princes of the country, were at this time conducted by Mr. *Randolph Marriott* and Major *John Carnac*: but their intimate agreements with *Bulwantsing*, Rajah of *Banâras*, were not finally concluded till the 20th
of



of *February* 1765. By those agreements the revenue for the year was settled at a fixed sum, so that the factory had no business with the interior collections for that year. All kinds of jurisdiction, civil and criminal, as exercised in the offices of the *Aumeen*, *Fowzdar*, and *Cutwál*, together with the mint at *Banárás*, were likewise formally given up, on the part of the Company, to the *Indian* government.

Mr. *Graham*, the third in Council, had arrived at *Banárás* a considerable time before the writer. Upon their arrival they respectively found, that the Chief's Banyan, a *Hindoo* of a very intriguing disposition, named *Durgachurn Metre*, in whom Mr. *Marriott* greatly confided, assuming the jurisdiction which had been formally given up on the part of the Company, decided arbitrarily, at his own house; on all matters that he could bring before him; whether they respected the business of the revenues, or the offices of the *Aumeen* or *Cutwál*. They found also, that the Chief had obtained a grant of the *Banárás*-mint, which he held on his own account.

With respect to the jurisdiction illegally exercised by the Banyan, under the Chief, it was equally disagreeable to Mr. *Graham* and the writer, as it made them appear extremely insignificant in the eyes of the natives. So likewise with respect to the mint, it was insisted on by Mr. *Graham*, as well as by the writer, that if Mr. *Marriott* was permitted to hold it, all were intitled to their respective shares of the emoluments which might arise from it, by virtue of the joint agreement of the 21st *November* 1764.

The first public letter from General *Carnac* to the Select Committee, advising the restoration of *Sujab al Dowlah* to his lost dominions, was dated the 26th *May* 1765; and in his letter of the * 17th *June* following he gives them the first *public hint*, that the *Zemin-dary* of *Banárás* was at too great a distance to be worth keeping; but presuming, as may be supposed, on his influence with Lord *Clive*, he had given a promise to Mr. *Isaac Sage*, a young man who had but lately been taken into the service as a writer, that he should be kept at *Banárás* in the quality of Resident, after the factory should be withdrawn, long before those measures were publicly adopted. Mr. *Graham*, apprized of the intended alterations, and assured of every promotion that could be effected in his favour, by his particular friend Mr. *Sumner*, a member of the Secret Committee, withdrew from the factory in time to avail himself of such lucrative and ho-

* See this letter in the Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 419.

nourable



nourable posts as were kept *in reserve* for him.—He was first placed in an intermediate station, that of Secretary to the Committee of Lands; from which he was soon removed to the Chiefship, or Residency of *Midnipore*, and his partner, Mr. *James Lawrell*, was placed in his office of Secretary.

It is not the writer's intention, in this place, to reflect on Mr. *Lawrell* or Mr. *Graham*, both gentlemen of abilities, equal to any in the Company's service; but merely to inform the reader, that those appointments were made all in the highest degree injurious to him, and contrary to the usage of the service.

Mr. *Graham*, in view of what was far more advantageous, had left the writer to settle the affair of the mint at *Banâras*, with Mr. *Marriott*, as well as he could. Unfortunately, on the 9th *August* 1765, a dispute happened between Mr. *Marriott* and him, relative to his having arrested a native at *Banâras*, named *Sadoololl*; on which that gentleman, the very next day, hastily appealed to the board at *Calcutta*, complaining of this arrest, as an infringement of his authority as chief.—This sudden and public appeal extorted, by way of recrimination, a complaint from the writer against Mr. *Marriott*, upon the subjects of the mint held by him, and the jurisdiction exercised by his banyan *Durgachurn Metre*.

The most perspicuous and effectual means of informing the reader of the true state of this affair will be to lay before him, at length, copies of all the letters and proceedings thereon, together with the decision made by the Governor and Council of *Calcutta*, in the precise order of their occurring. And however unimportant these affairs may appear, *primâ facie*, as private matters, yet, to the reader, who wishes for information on *India* affairs, they will afford real information of the nature of the interior police, and the administration of justice in *Bengal* and its connected provinces, under the government of the Company.

But that this narrative may not appear too much interrupted by an insertion here of all the papers that passed between the contending parties at *Banâras*, we have separately collected their proceedings at that factory by official consultations; their respective appeals to the Governor and Council at *Calcutta*, who recalled both parties to the Presidency, and there arbitrarily and unjustly did injure the writer by every possible means, alike as a trader and servant of the Company; together with the final decisions made, and the censures that were passed on the occasion, by that supreme board; and we have inserted them in our Appendix under the Letter C. with con-



junctive, narrative, and explanatory notes, for the information of the reader.

After the arrival of Mr. *Marriott* and the writer at *Calcutta*, the President and Council kept them a long while in unreasonable and cruel suspense. The board did not think proper to take up this business, on which they had been expressly call'd down to *Calcutta*, until the 17th *February* 1766; in which interval, strict, though groundless inquiries, were secretly made at *Bandras* for proofs of misconduct against the writer, who, in fact, had the whole Select Committee against him.

Mr. *Sumner* was the avowed protector of Mr. *Graham*, whose successive appointments were to be uninterruptedly secured to him, under that gentleman's patronage. General *Carnac* was the particular friend of Mr. *Sage*, to whom the factory at *Bandras* was to be given under the title of Residency; and Mr. *Sykes* was strongly attached to Mr. *Marriott*. The writer having been formerly in partnership with Mr. *John Johnstone*, there was reason to think, however unconnected in party-matters, that the friendly connexions which still subsisted between him and that much-injured gentleman, who had been in open contention with Lord *Clive* and the Select Committee, did not influence the noble Lord in the writer's favour: and much less was it probable, that Mr. *Verelst*, who, through his Lordship's manœuvres, had the chair of *Bengal* in view, in prejudice to Mr. *Sumner*, would thwart such measures as Lord *Clive* and General *Carnac* had determined upon.—The other members at the Council-board, at this time, acted the parts of mere cyphers.

Before this affair came on to be canvassed at the Board of Council, the writer waited on several of the members, who acknowledged that his cause was just, and his pleas for going back to *Bandras* in his former station, or else to have the Residency, in preference to Mr. *Sage*, were well founded.—Indeed, one gentleman informed him, that “the less he said on the affair, the better it would be for him:” and another member of the Council *honestly* declared to him, that “as he knew Lord *Clive* had a *bank* over him, he should not venture to give his sentiments in opposition to any opinion of his Lordship's.”

In this disposition of the President and Council, on the 17th *February* 1766, the affair between Mr. *Marriott* and the writer was taken into consideration, when, after reading all the written evidence, and examining the parties, *vivâ voce*, the board were pleased to

to



to pass their * judgment, “ that Mr. *Marriott* was highly culpable
 “ in renting the mint, but they humbly hoped, that, in considera-
 “ tion of his general good character; the Company would be satisf-
 “ fied with restitution, and take no further notice of the affair.”
 And with respect to the writer, they “ judged him highly deserving
 “ of censure for the disrespect he was guilty of towards his Chief,
 “ in taking upon himself to arrest *Sadoololl*; nor did they allow him
 “ any merit in the discovery of the mint-farm, as there was reason,” as
 they said, “ to believe he was too much influenced thereto, from his being
 “ refused a share therein by Mr. *Marriott*.”

But before we proceed to comment on what has been just related
 or referred to, it may be necessary to instance some other measures
 which have an intimate relation to the subject before us.

In the INSTRUCTIONS which the Select Committee gave to Lord
Clive, dated the 21st June 1765, for regulating his conduct at the
 personal interview then intended with the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*,
 for the purpose of restoring that Prince to his dominions, one † para-
 graph was penned as follows :

“ It will be necessary, however, that your Lordship obtain a full
 “ grant, in the fullest terms, for carrying on a free-trade through his
 “ dominions, with the privileges of establishing factories wherever
 “ we shall think proper, to which shall be annexed such contiguous
 “ lands and districts as may be found necessary to the convenience and
 “ support of the settlements. We mean without charge to *Sujah al*
 “ *Dowlah*, or diminution of his revenues. But the keeping of *Chu-*
 “ *nargur* and other strong holds, and protecting our commerce by
 “ a military power, is a measure concerning the expediency of
 “ which your Lordship will judge, from a further inquiry into cir-
 “ cumstances.”

In consequence of this instruction, although the question then was,
 not what the vanquished Nabob would grant, but what should be
 given, or restored to him, it was expressly stipulated, by Lord *Clive*
 and General *Carnac*, in the 8th article of the treaty of the ‡ 16th
August 1765, that his Highness “ should allow the *English* to carry
 “ on a trade, duty-free, throughout the whole of his dominions.” And
 in order to secure the attachment of *Bulwantsing*, and to guard him
 against the resentment of this Nabob, whom he had betrayed in the
 time of action, by the 5th article, his Zemindary was secured to him

* See this judgment at large in the Appendix C. page 336.

† Reports, vol. III. page 422.

‡ Considerations, &c. vol. I. Appendix, page 28.



under a fixed annual sum, which, in fact, made him more dependent on the *Calcutta* Government than on the Nabob to whom they chose to make him tributary. After the adjustment of this *treaty*, it was suggested by his Lordship and the General, that the Nabob had appeared extremely averse to the establishment of factories in his dominions; and although it is plain, that, considering the Nabob's dependent situation and the distinct jurisdiction of the Rajah, those objections, if any such were really made, could not in reason have been applied to the Company's factory before established at *Ban aras*, nevertheless, this suggestion was afterwards used as an argument to justify the propriety of the Committee's withdrawing that factory; notwithstanding the *treaty* of *August* 1765 continued in full force, and was even confirmed by a new * one.

In like manner, as if to give a sanction to the injustice that was intended to be practised towards the writer, in the transaction now under discussion, at a Select Committee held the 29th *October* 1765, it was entered on the Company's records, that *Sujah al Dowlah* had complained, in a letter received by the noble President on the 28th *October*, † “ that the business of his government met with great interruption from *the gentlemen* of the *English* factory at *Ban aras* ;” thereby recording on their proceedings, a fact injurious to the writer as second of that factory, which had not the least foundation in truth; since the letter before them appeared to contain a complaint in which Mr. *Marriott* ‡ alone was concerned. And in the sentence pronounced by the board against the writer, on the 17th *February* 1766, his information of Mr. *Marriott*'s holding the mint at *Ban aras* was distinguished by the appellation of a DISCOVERY, although, on the face of the proceedings before that very board, it appeared, that the noble President had been informed of the fact by a letter from Mr. *Marriott* himself, dated in § *June* 1765, as well as by the above-mentioned letter from *Sujah al Dowlah*, in *October* following; without holding any government-proceedings thereon.

There had been no public order of Council as yet made for withdrawing the factory at *Ban aras*, and therefore the writer applied to the board for leave to return to his station while the factory might be continued; or, if it should be withdrawn, to remain there

* Dated the 29th *November* 1768. See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 940.

† See Appendix C. page 330.

‡ Ibid. pages 331 and 332.

§ Ibid. page 311.



as Resident until the payment might be compleated of the fifty lacks which *Sujah al Dowlah* had agreed to give, upon being restored to his lost dominions; in pledge for payment whereof, he had deposited two large chests of very rich jewels, which were left at the factory under charge of Mr. *Sage*. But although the affair between Mr. *Marriott* and the writer had been finally adjudged by the Council, on the 17th *February* 1766; yet, as if the injustice of the judgment then given was not sufficient, on this occasion, his late * conduct at *Banâras*, which had been rather praise-worthy than

* At a Consultation held at *Calcutta* the 24th *February* 1766, present,

The Right Hon. *Robert Lord Clive*, President,
 Brigadier General *John Carnac*,
Harry Verelst,
Francis Sykes,
Randolph Marriott,
Hugh Watts,
Claud Russell,
William Aldersey,
Thomas Kelsall, and
Charles Ffloyer, Esquires.

“ Mr. *Bolts* sends in a letter, requesting permission to return to *Banâras* in his former station, to settle his concerns, as follows :

“ To the Right Honourable *Robert Lord Clive*, President and Governor, &c. Gentlemen of the Council.

“ My Lord and Gentlemen,

“ It is now upwards of four months, since, in consequence of the unhappy disputes at *Banâras*, you were pleased to give orders to Mr. *Marriott* and myself to repair to *Calcutta*, and deliver over to the present provisional Resident, the charge of the factory during our absence. As the business upon which we came down is now finished, on my own part I am to acquaint your Lordship, &c. gentlemen, that I am now ready, and only want your permission to repair back to my station, begging you will please soon to favour me therewith, that I may return to my family, from which I have been so long absent.

“ Should the factory be continued, I am perfectly satisfied with my present rank, as second, but in case the present establishment of Chief and Council be abolished, and only a gentleman, under Council, continued as Resident till the remainder of the *Tunkhaw* money be recovered, I have further to request, that I may be continued there. I humbly hope, from your impartiality, that in such case this will not only be esteemed my right, from my rank in, and the rules of the service; but that, in consideration of my family also, you will esteem it an equitable indulgence, when it is considered, that was I permitted to return to *Banâras* to settle my private concerns and bring my family down, acting during my stay in a private capacity only, at a factory where I have been respected in a public character, it would prove greatly prejudicial to my affairs, and highly



than blameable, was again brought on the carpet, as a pretence to justify the unparalleled indignity of putting the second in Council under the command of Mr. *Sage*, a writer at that factory.

At a subsequent consultation, held on the 3d *March* 1766, Mr. *Marriott*, who, as hath been shewn by the proceedings referred to in the last note, had now taken his seat at the board, entered a minute in his justification, on the subject of their sentence, and praying, that the President and Council would take the matter into further consideration, and mitigate the severity of the censure which they had passed upon him: and again, on the 23d *November* 1766, he wrote them another letter on the same subject. But though the board were pleased to take no notice of Mr. *Marriott's* minute, or letter, yet, that nothing may be thought omitted which could be produced, in vindication of either party, they are also inserted in the * Appendix.

The gentlemen of the Council who had flattered the writer with hopes of espousing his cause as an act of justice, at the consultation of the 17th *February* 1766, either changed their minds, or had not the spirit to record their dissents. The reader must have observed, that he was not censured upon any proved fact, but for what the Right Honourable the President and his Council were pleased to think, “*they had reason to believe INFLUENCED his conduct.*” And as to disrespect towards the chief at *Banâras*, considering all jurisdiction as formally given up by treaty to the *Indian*-government, the chief was equally as responsible to the country-laws as the writer; the officers of that government alone having a right to complain, if injured.

With respect to the first seizure of the merchant, *Sadoololl*, by peons, the writer had sufficiently accounted for it in his † letter

highly injurious to that reputation which every gentleman in the service would chuse to support in the eyes of the country people.

I am, with the greatest respect,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) WILLIAM BOLTS.”

Fort William,
the 21st February 1766.

The said letter being read,

“The board do not think Mr. *Bolt*: intitled to the indulgence he requests, *from his late conduct at Banaras*, but that he may have permission to return in a private capacity to settle his affairs till the first of *July* next.”

* See Appendix C. Number XXIII. and XXIV.

† Ibid. page 304.



to the board of the 12th *August* 1765. His conduct in that transaction was irreprehensible; and least of all men did it become Mr. *Verelst*, who sat in judgment on the writer for that affair, which was concluded during the government of his predecessor, to bring it again on the carpet. Yet it is upon the facts here fully stated, that Mr. *Verelst*, in order to mislead and prejudice the uninformed reader, has inserted these words: * “In the year 1765, we find him (*Bolts*) exercising summary jurisdiction *in his own cause*, and confining a merchant *for three days*, whom, at length, he was *compelled to release*. This appears from his own letters entered in the consultations of the Council in *February* 1766. He was soon after this *suspended* from his appointment at *Banâras*, &c.”

Upon every other fact alleged against the writer, Mr. *Verelst* has industriously given partial extracts of letters, or proceedings, to give a colour of truth to his assertions. Here he has *prudently* suppressed the whole, although, being a party to the judgment, he was entirely master of the subject.

If the writer's conduct relative to this affair, but particularly the first seizure of *Sadoololl* by peons, should in the mind of any unprejudiced reader, still require a further vindication; let him read what the Committee of Secrecy of the Honourable House of Commons have been pleased to report on the subject of this + practice. If

* *Verelst's View*, &c. page 39.

+ “Your Committee having inquired in what manner the *English* Company, or its servants, used to proceed, during the ancient government, to compel payment of their debts from any of the natives now residing under the *British* flag, they were informed by several of the witnesses, that where the debtor was a person dependant on, or connected with the Company, in the course of commerce, and residing (as those persons generally did) in the neighbourhood of any of the Company's settlements, the general practice was, to lay hold of his person by their own authority, without applying to any court, or officer of the government; that they sometimes ventured to exercise the same right even where the debtor did not fall under that description; but that this was an abuse, though generally overlooked by the government. That in the former case, the government tacitly allowed and countenanced the practice of seizing and detaining the debtor, it being much the disposition of the government to give all possible encouragement to the *Europeans*, from whose commerce their country then derived such considerable advantages. In cases where it was not thought prudent to proceed in this manner, the only remedy was by application to the government; but your Committee were informed, that there was seldom occasion to make use of either of these ways to compel payment of any debt to the Company, or its servants, for that the persons dealing with them, reaped so much benefit from that connexion, that there seldom arose any dispute between them.”

“Your Committee were further informed, that the *French*, and *Dutch* exercised the same privilege of seizing their debtors, and had even continued the practice after the Company's acquisition of the *Dewannee*.” See Reports, vol. IV. page 325.

pressed



pressed for an excuse, in justification of a conduct directed by no law or usage; the writer might say in the very words of Mr. Verelst, * “without examining my own conduct by rules which
 “were not formed for the scene in which I acted, it will fully
 “satisfy my ambition, if, to the candid and dispassionate, I shall
 “appear to have pursued the interests of my employers; to have
 “respected the rights of others, and to have deserved the character
 “of an honest man.” Or, in the same gentleman’s words, we might condemn the ideas of those persons † “who will estimate
 “our conduct in the government of *Bengal* by the rigid letter of
 “those laws which the more perfect polity of *Great Britain* can
 “alone admit.”

But the writer is not reduced to the necessity of availing himself of such subterfuges to palliate an invasion of the rights of mankind; for the fact was, that the *Cutwâl*, to whom he had applied, hesitated to appear in the exercise of the jurisdiction of his own office, from his fear of the chief’s banyan. The writer’s acting, therefore, at all in this affair, which was the first and last of the kind in which he was ever concerned, was in his capacity of second in Council at *Banâras*; in reality, more with a view of wresting from the banyan, *Durgachurn Metre*, the jurisdiction he had assumed, and of restoring it to the *Cutwâl*, who alone had a legal right to exercise it, than from any other motive whatever.

When the reader has considered the whole tenor of the conduct of the Governor and Council towards the writer, throughout this transaction, he will not be surprized when informed, that the examinations contained in the ‡ proceedings held at *Banâras*, by which the writer had established all his facts, and upon which his justification most materially depended, although read at the board, *were neither incorporated with the proceedings of the Council, NOR TRANSMITTED HOME TO THE COURT OF EAST INDIA DIRECTORS*, as is the invariable usage of the service. Whether this suppression was occasioned by any secret enemy of the writer, or some secret friend of Mr. *Marriott*, may be difficult to discover. But most probably this, as well as the partiality of the public proceedings on this occasion, with respect to the writer, did serve to confirm, in the ideas of some of the Directors, the general and favourite positions

* *Verelst’s View*, &c. page 131.

† *Ibid.* page 130³

‡ See Appendix C. pages 321 to 329.



of the Select Committee, by adding one more to THEIR LIST of unprofitable, or suspected servants; especially as that Court was afterwards pleased implicitly to * confirm the unjust sentence of the President and Council at *Calcutta*.

Soon after the board's second judgment of the 24th *February* 1766, the writer returned to *Banaras*, under the indignity imposed on him, to put his mercantile concerns in a way that might enable him to leave them to the management of his agents, after he should quit the country, to reside at *Calcutta*, in obedience to the orders of the board. But before we proceed further in this narrative, it is necessary to explain the nature, extent, and consequences of the trade which the writer carried on in the provinces of *Owd* and *Illa-habad*; first premising, that the whole of his said trade was strictly legal, according to the laws and usages of *Hindostan*, and equally conformable to the existing regulations of the board at *Calcutta*, the uniform usages of the Company, and the orders of the *East India* Directors, besides being highly beneficial to the Company's affairs; as the reader will see incontrovertibly demonstrated in the course of these discussions.

The first concern of consequence was his importing, at *Banaras*, to the amount of near twenty thousand pounds sterling worth of woollens, and other *British* staple-commodities, which he had purchased at the Company's public auctions in *Calcutta*.

The second was his manufactories of saltpetre, which he had established at great expence and risk, in many places where that article was never before produced; for the more effectual prosecution of which, he had purchased of Messrs. *Randolph* and *William Marriott*, and *Isaac Sage*, all the advances which they had made for this article, paying them *seventy-five per cent.* clear profit on the sums they had disbursed.

The third was his manufactories of opium, which, from encouraging the cultivation of that drug in grounds where it had never been planted before, he increased to such a degree as to make them produce him three hundred chests in one season.

The fourth was the importation of cotton from a distant country, in an unusual track, down the river *Jumna* into *Bengal*; which he also carried on to the extent of ten thousand pounds sterling capital amount of cotton imported in one season.

* See Appendix C. Number XXV. page 340.



The fifth was, of diamonds, which he imported in a direct channel from the mines of *Panna* and *Chudderpoor*, being at the distance of above seven hundred miles from *Calcutta*.—The writer considered, that by giving the merchants proper encouragement, it would be as easy to direct the course of that valuable trade to *Banárás*, as to *Madrás*, which had for many years been the established mart for them. It was the writer who first opened this direct channel among the *English* in *Bengal*; and the good treatment which the merchants experienced from him in this traffick, brought him a complimentary letter from *Hindooput*, the *Rajah* of the country.

The reader will perceive, that all these valuable branches of trade were carried on by the writer, “*beyond, or without the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa.*” And it must likewise at first sight appear evident, that they all strongly tended to promote the interests of the Company.

The *first*, because it was extending, in a considerable degree, the Company’s imports, and particularly those from *England*, highly advantageous to this kingdom.

The *second* and *third*, because the increased importation of saltpetre and opium into *Bahar* and *Bengal*, would tend to the making of those commodities cheap where the Company have most occasion for them.

The *fourth*, because it was a new channel of supply for cotton, on the abundance of which article, at the provincial markets, depended the cheapness, goodness, and full supply of the callico-manufactures, the great staple of the Company’s assumed dominions: and

The *fifth*, because it was opening a new branch of trade in diamonds, which was furnishing an important additional means for remitting private fortunes to *Europe*, with advantage to the Company, instead of being injurious, as almost every other was.

When Lord *Clive* was at *Banárás*, in the beginning of *August* 1765, the writer communicated to him the plan he had formed for the bringing of diamonds directly from the mines, to which he had already sent an agent. His Lordship approved of the scheme, and verbally agreed to take a concern in it; but soon afterwards, so far altered his mind as to quit his engagement, and undertake the engrossing of it to himself; for which purpose he established Mr. *John Chamier* as his agent at *Banárás*. By a letter, dated the 4th of *October* 1765, his Lordship informed the writer, that he had given over all thoughts of purchasing diamonds; but at the
time



time when that letter came to hand, the writer was shewn, by Mr. *Chamier*, other letters from his Lordship, in which he had given that gentleman, as his * agent, orders to make very large purchases of them, while, at the same time, he cautioned him *to be aware of Bolts*.

This was sufficient information to the writer of what he had to expect. † Dissembling, however, his real sentiments, on the noble Lord's giving up his intended share, the writer kept on his own account, the ‡ parcels purchased by the agent first employed, and

* To a charge against Lord *Clive*, transmitted to him by the *East India Directors*, his Lordship, on the 30th *March* 1772, answered, in the Honourable House of Commons, as follows :

“ The second charge against me is a monopoly of diamonds ; and this also I get rid of in a few words. There are only two channels by which a servant of the Company can, with propriety, remit his fortune. The one, by paying the money into the treasury in *India*, and receiving bills upon the Company, payable in *England* ; the other, by diamonds.

“ By the acquisition of the Dewannee, and the successful endeavours of the Select Committee, the Company's treasury was *so rich*, that we could not have been justified in drawing bills upon the Company. It was necessary I should, in some mode, remit the amount of my jagueer. For this purpose, and for this only, *I sent an agent into a distant and independant country*, to make purchases of diamonds. Those diamonds were not sent home clandestinely ; I caused them to be registered ; I paid the duty upon them ; and these remittances, upon the whole, turn out three *per cent.* worse than bills of exchange upon the Company. This is all I know of a monopoly of diamonds.” See his Lordship's speech, printed for *J. Walter*, page 9.

† See the following letter to Mr. *Strachey*, who was then Lord *Clive*'s Secretary.

“ To Henry Strachey, Esq;

“ S I R,

“ I was duly favoured with your letter of the 2d instant, as also one from his Lordship, dated the 4th.—As his Lordship has given over all thoughts of investing his money in diamonds, I also have entirely set aside that scheme, for my sole motive in that undertaking would have been to render myself serviceable to him. I myself should not have bought a single stone, nor have offered to take a small concern, only his Lordship, in his conversation with me, told me he thought it would be best for me to hold a small share. The trifle I have purchased, I shall have the pleasure of shewing to his Lordship in *Calcutta*.

“ In consequence of the orders of the board, as soon as I get a *Budgerow*, which I am daily in expectation of, I shall set off for *Calcutta*.

I am, &c. &c.

Banâras, the 29th Oct. 1765.

(Signed)

WILLIAM BOLTS.”

‡ The first diamonds sent to *England*, from this new channel of communication, were of these parcels obtained by the writer, who was not so unsuccessful in his remittance, as the noble Lord says he was in those which he engaged in. They were sold in *London* in the year 1766, by Mr. *Abraham de Paiba*, who declared them to be, upon the whole, fifteen *per cent.* better than the assortments that were then received from *Madrafs*.



relinquished the trade ; which his Lordship, by his own agent, then engaged in, with the assistance of the very servants whom the writer had employed, and by the track of correspondence which he had opened.

In the month of *July* 1766, his Lordship and General *Carnac* paid another visit to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* ; who, with the Rajah *Bulwantsing*, met them on the borders of the *Babar* province, at *Chupprah*. Strong injunctions were there made to the Nabob for impeding the writer's trade, and even for compelling him to quit the province of *Banâras* ; and it was also recommended to the Rajah to lodge complaints against him. But the Nabob having a personal regard for him was, equally with the Rajah, averse to the doing him such an injury : on the contrary, intelligence was immediately sent from *Chupprah* to the writer, then at *Banâras*, of the secret measures that were thus in pursuit against him. Soon after this, an order, evidently proceeding from private instructions that had been sent from *Chupprah*, was issued by the board at *Calcutta* to Mr. *Isaac Sage*, the Resident at *Banâras*, directing him, on three days notice, to send the writer down to *Calcutta* by force : and about the same time, Mr. *Sage* likewise received private instructions for causing a stop to be put to his business. In consequence of such instructions, on the evening of the 21st *August* 1766, Mr. *Sage*, in company with Lord *Clive's* agent, Mr. *Chamier*, then at *Banâras*, waited upon the Rajah *Bulwantsing*, at his house called *Durgakoon*, and ordered him to put a stop to all the writer's mercantile business ; which, however, the Rajah was so far from complying with, that he immediately sent him private intelligence thereof, with the strongest marks of his disapprobation of such treacherous measures.

For the public proceedings of the board at *Calcutta* on the before-mentioned occasions, not to swell our Appendix to an enormous size, we beg leave to refer the reader to the copies of the papers contained in the * notes hereunto subjoined ; only reminding him that such severity

* At a Consultation held the 28th *July* 1766, present,
William Brightwell Sumner, Esq; President, in the absence of Lord *Clive*,
Harry Verelst,
Randolph Marriott,
Hugh Watts,
Claud Russell,
William Aldersey,
Thomas Kelsall, and
Charles Ffloyer, Esquires.

“ Mr. *Balts* having exceeded the time limited in Consultation, the 24th *February* 1766
 “ for his return to *Calcutta* from *Banâras*, “ Ordered,



verity was practised towards no man in or out of the Company's service, except the writer ; and that upon all occasions of other persons being

“ *Ordered*, That Mr. Sage, the Resident at that factory, be directed to inform him, that the board are displeased with the neglect he has shewn to their orders. That he is therefore to send him down immediately ; and that unless Mr. Bolts arrives in Calcutta by the 28th August, he will stand dismissed the service.”

“ To William Bolts, Esq;

“ S I R,

“ The President and Council of Fort William being displeased at your exceeding the time limited for your stay at Banâras, direct that you leave this place in three days from the date hereof. They likewise order me to acquaint you, that you are allowed to the 28th of this month to perform your journey to Calcutta ; and that if you are not there at the above time, you from that day stand dismissed the Company's service.

I am, S I R,

Banâras,
the 9th August 1766.

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) ISAAC SAGE.”

“ To the Right Honourable Robert Lord Clive, President, &c. Council of Fort William.

“ My Lord and Gentlemen,

“ Mr. Sage has communicated to me your orders of the 28th July, respecting my stay at Banaras, with the rigorous penalty of dismissal from the service annexed, in case I do not arrive in Calcutta by the 28th of the present month. By the severity of the order it would appear your Lordship, &c. Gentlemen apprehended I had stayed intentionally beyond the time allowed me, and had contumaciously disregarded the limit of absence with which I was indulged. But I assure you it was far otherwise ; and that nothing but the absolute and disagreeable necessity I have been, and still am under, from the situation of my concerns, could have forced me to stay an hour beyond the time allowed me.

“ When I left Calcutta, I was in hopes of being able to finish the Banaras affairs, I was then deeply engaged in, within the time allotted me. Since my arrival here, as Mr. Sage can testify, I have been no way deficient in my endeavours ; which have been rendered fruitless, not only from want of time to prepare my goods, but from other disagreeable circumstances, by which even those I had ready have been detained.

“ In consequence of the late regulations, I applied to the factory at Patna for dustucks, which were denied me ; being told, in answer to my application, that dustucks were prohibited to be granted into Sujah al Dowlah's dominions. On a second application, however, they were granted, and only within these few days past I have received them. In the mean time my goods were detained, and duties have actually been collected on some by Sujah al Dowlah's officers.

“ Now I have obtained the dustucks, by the seizure of boats for the transportation of the brigade, and other public occasions, I have been not only deprived of those I had procured, but am incapacitated from procuring others, till the transportation of the brigade to Patna be completed. Moreover, there is no person here to whom I can leave the management and conclusion of my own intricate affairs, any more than those of my constituents, without evident risk of destruction to the whole, from mismanagement, as well as the risk of losing whatever might be left behind after the rains, by

“ troubles



being recalled from subordinate factories to the presidency, indulgences of time were allowed them, with the politeness due to gentlemen, unattended with insults or forcible seizures.

Before

“ troubles which may be apprehended in the country. So that it would be highly injurious, not only to my own family concerns, but to those of gentlemen concerned with me, to abandon them now, so near the period of their conclusion, when a very small additional indulgence of time, no longer than to the beginning of *October* next, would enable me to finish, and to transport my effects and family to the Presidency; which I have hitherto found absolutely impracticable, notwithstanding my most earnest endeavours.

“ I trouble you, my Lord and Gentlemen, with this, otherwise needless detail of the difficulties I labour and have laboured under, in order to shew what my delay has been owing to, and to satisfy you that I have been in no shape wilfully culpable.

“ The severe orders of your honourable board have flung me into a dilemma, which presents me with nothing but ruin. If I quit my affairs, as ordered, it is evident ruin. If I do not, and you, my Lord and Gentlemen, be inexorable, I am then disgraced by your honourable board, which is equivalent to ruin.

“ But as clemency is no way derogatory of power, I flatter myself that, in consequence of my foregoing representation, you will still be pleased to indulge me with leave to stay at *Banâras* to the beginning of *October* next, and only put your rigorous resolves in execution upon my exceeding that time.

“ Be assured, my Lord and Gentlemen, that nothing but this fatal dilemma would force me to run even the risk of your displeasure, much less actually to incur it. And when it is considered, that I have now several years faithfully served the Company; that my present transgression has not been wilful, but unavoidable; and that the same and greater indulgences have been frequently allowed to other gentlemen in similar situations, I am bold to hope something may be remitted from the severity of your determination, and that you will indulgently gratify my request.

Banaras,

I am, &c.

the 11th August 1766.

(Signed)

WILLIAM BOLTS.”

The proceedings of the board at *Calcutta*, upon the foregoing letter, were as follow:

At a Consultation held the 25th *August* 1766, present,
The Right Honourable *Robert* Lord *Clive*, President,
Harry Verelst,
Randolph Marriott,
Claud Russell,
William Aldersey, and
Thomas Kelsall, Esquires.

“ Received a letter from the Resident at *Banaras*, dated the 12th instant, acknowledging the receipt of our letter of the 28th *ultimo*, inclosing a letter from Mr. *Bolts*, in answer to our orders regarding him; acquainting us, that as he is not sensible it is in his power to comply with that part of our instructions which requires him to take care Mr. *Bolts* does not exceed the time prescribed, he shall wait our further commands before he ventures to take a step in so delicate an affair:

“ Read a letter from Mr. *Bolts*, inclosed in the above letter from Mr. *Sage*, setting forth his reasons for having stayed at *Banâras* beyond the time we limited him to, and
“ requesting



Before this period, many other appointments, besides those already mentioned, were made of junior servants to superior stations, to the prejudice of the writer: by which it evidently appeared, that the Right Honourable Lord and his Committee deemed him, as they had represented the rest of the servants, deficient in integrity or abilities. But although they seemed carefully to avoid giving him an opportunity for exerting such poor talents as they thought him possessed of, in any of the Company's commercial departments, yet they shewed it was their opinion, that he had sufficient capacity and integrity for the administration of justice in one of his Majesty's Courts of Justice in *Calcutta*; because, on the 11th of *August* 1766, they elected and appointed him one of the Judges in the Mayor's Court.

While such indignities and persecutions as have been described were daily imposed on the writer, it was impossible for him as a man unconscionable of guilt either in his public or private capacity, to continue any longer in the service of the Company. Soon after his return to the Presidency he therefore begged leave to resign their commercial service, in a letter, addressed to the Right Honourable the President and Council, dated the 10th of *November* 1766; in which, notwithstanding the injuries he had received, he did not forget the

“ requesting us to indulge him with a longer stay, to settle his own and the affairs of his constituents, which he represents to be extremely intricate.

“ *Agreed*, We write in answer to Mr. *Sage*, that we did not imagine him so little acquainted with the nature of our orders as to be doubtful how far it behoved him to put them in execution. That notwithstanding what Mr. *Bolts* alleges in his letter, we are well assured that, instead of making it his business to settle his affairs at *Banaras*, which was the sole reason of his being permitted to return thither, he entered into new concerns. That he is therefore to inform Mr. *Bolts* we are determined our orders shall not be trifled with, and that he is to consider himself as suspended the Company's service from the 28th of this month, for not complying with our positive injunctions for his return to *Calcutta*. However, in consideration of the plausible reasons he now for the first time assigns, he is further to acquaint Mr. *Bolts*, that provided he arrives at *Calcutta* by the 10th *October*, his suspension will be taken off; and if for this purpose he does not leave *Banaras* by the 1st of *October*, that he is to send him away by force.”

With respect to the new concerns which, in this letter, the board say they were assured the writer had entered into, there appeared nothing on their records to justify the assertion. It is therefore probable, that this paragraph was occasioned by some private letter which the President had received from his Agent, Mr. *Chamier*, at *Banaras*, who was one of the persons that had in view the getting possession of the writer's trade and manufacturing; but it must be remarked, that if the board's assertion had been true, the writer was then under no public prohibition or restraint, with respect to his mercantile transactions: nor could any such have been legally imposed on him.

respect



respect due to superiors. The following is an extract from his letter to the board on this occasion.

“ To the Right Honourable *Robert Lord Clive*, President and Governor, and to the Gentlemen of the Council at *Fort William*.

“ My Lord and Gentlemen,

“ I propose going to *Europe* as soon as I can settle my private concerns, which business, together with the employment to which your Lordship, &c. Gentlemen have been pleased to appoint me, as Alderman in the Mayor's Court, will ingross the whole of my time. I therefore hereby request permission to resign the service of the honourable Company. Permit me at the same time to assure my honourable masters, that I shall ever most heartily rejoice at the continued prosperity of the Company, and retain a due sense of gratitude for the independent fortune which their service has enabled me to acquire; a fortune which, I glory, has been gained by *industry and lawful trade alone*. Permit me further, my Lord and Gentlemen, to add my sincerest wishes for the success of your endeavours to secure the permanency of the great and advantageous acquisitions which our honourable employers at this time enjoy; and believe me to be, with the greatest respect,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Fort William,
the 10th Nov. 1766.

Your most obedient humble servant,
(Signed) WILLIAM BOLTS.”

To which letter the following answer was returned :

“ To Mr. *William Bolts*.

“ S I R,

“ I am directed by the Right Honourable the President and Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to them of the 10th instant, and to acquaint you, that your request to resign the honourable Company's service is complied with.

I am, S I R,

Fort William,
the 26th Nov. 1766.

Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) WILLIAM ALDERSEY, Sec.”



It was about this time, according to * Mr. *Verelst*, that the writer, a † *virtuous zealot*, a ‡ *sturdy champion*, and a || *patriot*, commenced his *furious zeal for reformation*. But while it is submitted to the judgment of the candid reader, how far any part of his conduct, which is now wholly laid before him, merits such reflections, the writer will proceed to say a few necessary words on the alterations which had taken effect, about this period, in the state of the private inland-trade; as particularly connected with his own case.

When the Right Honourable Lord *Clive* and his Committee entered upon regulating the inland-trade of the country, the writer, as hath been shewn, was at *Banâras*. It was impossible to conceive the meaning of the various orders which they issued at that period, respecting commerce, in the *Bengal* provinces. But as, by the agreements of *August* 1765, they had pretended to restore the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* and the Rajah *Bulwantsing* to the possession of the respective districts which they were pleased to assign them, if any faith could be placed in such agreements, those Princes were to be left to the government of their own territories; and consequently the rules or LAWS of the Presidency at *Calcutta* could no more be supposed to extend to *Banaras*, than to § *China*; whether they acted as Governor and Council, or as Nabob of *Bengal*.

But all the writer could know of their orders upon this subject, at that distance from *Calcutta*, was from vague and uncertain reports. Their first step had been the ordering of all free-merchants, together with all *European*, *Armenian*, and *Portuguese* agents, from the interior country down to the Presidency. The writer knew that Mr. *Verelst*, then a member of the Select Committee, did, in the year 1764, give

* *Verelst's View*, &c. page 39.

† *Ibid.* page 20.

‡ *Ibid.* page 21.

|| *Ibid.* page 40.

§ This appears so self-evident a conclusion, that it would be absurd to require an argument in support of it. Nevertheless, to shew what were the opinions of other old and able servants of the Company, in a case exactly similar, we will here inform the reader, that when the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn* attempted, by means of his Fowzdar, or Governor at *Rangamatty* (a place bordering on the kingdom of *Assam*) to lay restraints on the trade of the Company's servants into and from that kingdom, the following were the words of a letter from Messrs. *Cartier*, *Senior*, *Leycester*, and *French*, then at *Dacca*, to the President and Council at *Calcutta*, dated the 10th *January* 1763, on that occasion:

“ With respect to *Assam*, we must beg leave to observe, that the Nabob, or his Fowzdar
“ of *Rangamatty*, can have no more right to regulate the terms of our commerce with the
“ natives of that country, than with those of *China*. All the power he exerts over our gomaf-
“ tahs is arbitrary and oppressive; and neither justice nor ancient customs can warrant such
“ abuses, or regulate his officers in the collecting of taxes, although the whole direction is
“ now referred to his Daroga (an under-officer) at *Rangamatty*. No duties have ever yet
“ been paid on lacks, muggadhooties, and other goods brought from *Assam*,” &c. &c.



his * opinion in the strongest terms in favour of employing *European* agents in preference to the natives. There was no proof of bad conduct given against the gentlemen recalled ; and if any had been guilty of misdemeanors, it was unjust to involve the innocent in punishment with the guilty. Most of them resided at the Company's subordinate settlements, within the jurisdiction of his Majesty's charter of justice, and under the eyes of their Chiefs and Councils ; over whom also they, in their turns, were the most natural and best checks. Besides, the President and Council at *Calcutta* had it in their power, through the nominal Nabobs of *Bengal*, to make and enforce what regulations they pleased, to prevent such abuses as might be dreaded, or to inflict punishments for those practised. It was therefore difficult to comprehend the propriety of such a measure.

So likewise, when they made what they were pleased to term their † regulations for the provinces of *Bengal*, *Babar*, and *Orissa*, they appointed *Juggut Seat*, *Coosbaulchund*, and *Odweichund*, “ CHIEFS OF “ TRADE,” with immense annual salaries : but what the business of those appointments was intended to be, or what the young *Seats* transacted in consequence thereof, was never known to the Public ; nor did they or the Company ever receive a single ‡ instance of service therefrom. At one time, a law was made prohibiting § “ any of the “ inhabitants from going beyond the limits of ten miles round *Calcutta*, “ without first applying for and obtaining the COMPANY'S PERMISSION.” At another time, no merchant was permitted to purchase goods at the manufacturing towns without a *perwânah*, or license from the Governor.

The objects of the Committee, in establishing these different regulations, were alleged to be the advantage of the Company and the good of the native people. But how the application of such regulations could be made productive of those ends would be difficult to reconcile to sound reason or experience. The real wisdom of such proceedings, therefore, apparently consisted in the sagacious and virtuous governing-party's securing every advantage of dealing to themselves : and indeed correspondent with the principles of such policy did the effects of their practice really prove.

In the general letter to *Bengal*, dated the 8th *February* 1764, the Court of Directors, after observing that the disputes and difficulties

* See Appendix A, Num. ~~IX~~. page 25.

† Reports, vol. III. page 421.

‡ See the 41st paragraph of the letter from the Directors, Appendix, page 255.

§ At a Consultation held at *Calcutta*, on the 24th *March* 1766.



which had occurred with the country-government, appeared evidently to have been occasioned by the unwarrantable manner of carrying on *the private trade of their servants*, in prejudice to the Nabob, both with respect to the authority and revenues justly due to him, were pleased to direct,

* Par. 22. “ That as our firmaun-privileges, of being duty-free, “ are certainly confined to *the Company’s export and import trade only*, “ you are to have recourse to and keep within the liberty therein stipulated and given, as nearly as can possibly be done; but as by “ the connivance of the *Bengal* government, and † constant usage, “ the Company’s covenant-servants have had the same benefit as the “ Company with respect to their *export and import trade*, we are “ willing they should enjoy the same, and that duffucks be granted “ accordingly: but herein the most effectual care is to be taken, that “ no excesses or abuses are suffered, upon any account whatsoever, “ nor duffucks granted to any others than our covenant-servants, as “ aforesaid; however, notwithstanding any of our former orders, no “ writer is to have the benefit of a duffuck until he has served out his “ full time of five years in that station: *free-merchants and others are “ not intitled to, or to have the benefit of, the Company’s duffucks, but “ are to pay the usual duties.*”

Par. 24. “ We are under the necessity of giving the before- “ mentioned orders, in order to preserve the tranquillity of the coun- “ try, and harmony with the Nabob. They are rather outlines “ than complete directions, which you are to add to and improve “ upon, agreeable to the spirit of, and our meaning in them, as “ may be necessary to answer the desired purposes; and if any per- “ son or persons are guilty of a contravention of them, be they “ whomsoever they may, if our own servants, they are to be dis- “ missed the service; if others, the Company’s protection is to be “ withdrawn, and you have the liberty of *sending them forthwith to “ England*, if you judge the nature of the offence requires it.”

By the above letter it does not appear, that the Directors chose to advert to the nature of the Company’s own trade under the firmaun.

But the reasons urged against carrying on the private trade of their servants under that privilege operated with redoubled force against their own. At all the manufacturing towns, the gomastahs of the

* See Reports, vol. III. page 206.

† It has already been shown that the privilege of duffucks was allowed to the Company’s covenant-servants, by the express orders of the Court of Directors, contained in their general letter of the 17th of June 1748. See page 7.



Company had the preference ; for no private gomastah could do any business among the weavers till they were served. They alone decided all disputes ; and it was under the sanction of their authority that all oppressions were practised, wherever there was a Company's gomastah established.

Still wilfully losing sight of the truth, in pursuit of ideas of commerce which had never been thought of before the year 1764, and at a period when the Company ingrossed almost the whole produce of the country, the Directors, in a letter to *Bengal*, dated the 26th *April* 1765, thus ingeniously argue : “ Treaties of commerce are “ understood to be *for the mutual benefit of the contracting parties*. Is “ it then possible to suppose, that *the Court of Debly*, by confirming “ the privilege of trading free of customs, could mean an *inland-trade* “ in the commodities of *their own country* to the detriment of their “ revenues, and the ruin of their own merchants ?”

In support of the new and unintelligible principles, at this period adopted by the *East India* Directors, and of the measures pursued by the noble Lord *Clive* and his Select Committee at *Bengal*, with respect to the *inland-trade*, his Lordship also * speaks thus to the honourable House of Commons :

“ Many years ago, an expensive embassy was sent to *Debly*, to “ obtain certain grants and privileges from the GREAT MOGUL, in “ favour of the *East India* Company, and amongst others was ob- “ tained the privilege of trading duty-free. The servants were in- “ dulg'd with this privilege under the sanction of the Company's “ name. The Company never carried on any inland-trade. Their “ commerce has been confined to *exports* and *imports only*. It is im- “ possible that the servants should have a more extensive right than “ the Company itself ever had : yet they claimed a privilege of “ carrying on an *inland-trade* duty-free. The absurdity of a privi- “ lege so ruinous to the natives, and so prejudicial to the revenues “ of the country, is obvious. At the revolution, in 1757, no such “ claim was set up ; *nor was any such trade carried on publicly*, or to “ my knowledge, during my government, which ended in the be- “ ginning of the year 1760.”

Was it necessary to inform the Courts who had the direction of *East India* affairs in the years 1765, 1766, and 1767, that the goods provided for the Company, in *Bengal*, were all *commodities of that country* ? That every one of those commodities is occasionally

* See his Lordship's printed speech of the 30th *March* 1772, page 12.



an export? Or that an exemption from duties upon their investment, which comprehended the greatest part of all the goods produced in the country, was a *diminution of the revenues of THE COURT OF DEHLY*, and tended to the “ruin of *their merchants?*”

After having read the various orders of the Courts of *East India* Directors, from the earliest period of their acquisition of privileges, authorizing their servants and others to trade under their duffucks duty-free; after knowing what numbers of duffucks were granted for such private trade, previous to the year 1760; and after perusing the TREATY made by Lord Clive in June 1757, on setting up *Meer Jaffier Ally Khawn*, in which such immense sums were stipulated for restitution of losses sustained by the private merchants of *Calcutta*: shall the honourable House of Commons be seriously told, that there was no such *inland-trade* carried on in *Bengal* before the year 1760?

Was it necessary to inform the noble Lord, who, in the years 1765 and 1766, had himself been, in fact, the GREAT MOGUL, if not the EAST INDIA COMPANY, that the mutual relation, if ever there existed any, between the “*contracting parties*,” was then at an end; and that in the situation of *Hindustan* at that and the subsequent periods, with respect to *Bengal* and its dependencies, the firmaun was become a piece of waste paper?

Here the line should have been drawn; for what might have been beneficial for the Company and their servants to encroach under the pretended sanction of the firmaun, at a former period, became ruinous from the moment in which they took the sovereignty of *Bengal* upon themselves. It was to the freedom of trade that *Bengal* owed her ancient prosperity: and it has been principally owing to the want of that freedom, among other causes, to which we must ascribe the justness of Mr. * *Becher's* remark, that the condition of the people of *Bengal* has been worse since the accession of the Company to the Dewannee than it was before.

To peruse all the arguments of parties contending with different views, on the subject of the *inland-trade* in *Bengal*, during the time in which the Company were hesitating whether there should be a

* Extract of a letter from Richard Becher, Esq; a member of the Select Committee at Bengal, and then Resident at the Durbar, to Governor Verelst at Calcutta; dated the 24th June 1769.

“It must give pain to an *Englishman* to have reason to think, that since the accession of the Company to the Dewannee, the condition of the people of this country has been worse than it was before; and yet I am afraid the fact is undoubted.”



Nabob, or no Nabob, would be an endless and unprofitable task. The reader not possessed of local knowledge of *India* would be perplexed by opposite sentiments and authorities, equally weighty in appearance. The Courts of Directors in former times were of one opinion, in modern times of another. In the year 1760, Major *Carnac*, Mr. *Verelst*, and the whole Council, were of opinions different from Mr. *Wassittart* and Mr. *Hastings*, whose sentiments were approved by the Directors. Soon afterwards, Mr. *Scrafton*, and the other Directors, differed from Mr. *Wassittart*. At another period, Lord *Clive*, General *Carnac*, and Mr. *Verelst* differed from the rest of the Council, and the Directors afterwards differed from them all.

In support of their favourite temporary systems, the parties have sometimes made distinctions without differences, to perplex the subject. Thus we see in the noble Lord's speech, already cited, the Honourable House of Commons were told, "that the Company never carried on any inland-trade," and that "their commerce had been confined to *exports and imports only*."

It is true, that the goods which the Company imported were all sold at the Presidency of *Calcutta*, and those they bought in the interior country were all brought to *Calcutta*, and exported. But in both cases they have constantly given their dustucks, to the persons who bought their goods at *Calcutta* to transport and sell them, duty-free, wherever they pleased; and to the persons from whom they bought their goods, to bring them, in like manner, from the places where they lay, or were provided: as is particularly expressed in the letter from the Directors, of the * 17th June 1748.

Is not this, to all intents and purposes, carrying on an "*inland-trade*?" or where is the REAL MERCHANT who can draw a fair distinction? If in bringing, or carrying goods from or to a place distant three hundred miles from *Calcutta*, a merchant, half-way on his journey, should find a demand for his commodities, the man who sells them on that spot is doing as great a service to the country, as he who conveys them to a port for final exportation. But in the articles of salt and grain, against dealing in which the greatest and most futile objections have been raised; the inland-trader does far greater service to a manufacturing-country than an exporter of those commodities. Yet have we seen even *East India* Directors affect to adopt this modern distinction, of articles for

* See page 7.



inland-trade, and articles for *foreign exportation*; between which no line can ever be usefully drawn in *Bengal*, or indeed any where else. Nay, what is more ridiculous, while acting as Sovereigns of that country, we have seen them gravely pretending to accommodate such regulations to the intention and spirit of the *Firmaun*!

In the perplexity, therefore, in which this subject has been studiously involved, the reader will naturally have recourse to the first simple principles of policy and commerce, which must be invariably the same in all places and times; conformably to which, every man has the right to buy and sell what and where he pleases, paying all legal duties, and submitting to all lawful restrictions: and such is well known to have ever been the practice in *Hindustan*.

The meaning, therefore, of the various extraordinary commercial-regulations made at the Presidency of *Calcutta*, in the years 1765 and 1766, of which we shall treat more fully in a subsequent chapter, being quite incomprehensible to a merchant, or indeed to any other man, whose mind was less illuminated than a member's of the Select Committee, it was, consequently, to the first uncorrupted principles of policy, justice, and commerce, that the writer had recourse. When at *Banâras*, a considerable time before he had any thoughts of quitting the Company's service or of discontinuing business, he therefore settled a plan with the *Rajah Bulwantsing*, within whose territories his trade latterly was chiefly prosecuted, for carrying it on upon a footing with the natives, and paying the established duties. These were the engagements to which he was principally indebted for that favour and protection which he and his people afterwards experienced from the *Rajah*, and to such conduct did he owe the preference in dealings, which the natives of the *Ghazipoor* province, when left to act freely for themselves, always did give him and his agents, to any other go-mastahs of *Europeans*. From this conduct was he likewise enabled to procure money from the merchants of *Banâras*, to any amount, at the interest of from five to seven *per cent. per annum*, where afterwards it could not be procured by others for even twelve *per cent.* and it was from this conduct that the writer, after his resignation, without the influence of a Company's-servant, and in spite of repeated private orders from the President and members of the Council, for the obstruction of his business, was enabled successfully to prosecute legal trade, till military force was employed to seize the persons of his agents, and rob him of his property.

It



It has been already shewn, that the first great man with whom the writer's trade interfered, was the noble Lord *Clive*, who right honourably deprived him of the benefits of his own discovery.

The second set of gentlemen to whom his trade was offensive, were those concerned in the monopoly of cotton imported from *Surat*, of which some account has been * already given. The cotton imported by the writer, from the western countries, was little inferior to that from *Surat*; and the stream of the *Ganges* flowing constantly and with great strength eastward, into the *Bengal* provinces, his cotton could be transported from *Banâras* in ten or twelve days, to distances that would require six weeks or two months for its conveyance so far up that river, by towing against the rapidity of the current. The writer, therefore, had evidently the advantage of all the inland-markets.

A third set, with whom, unfortunately for the writer, his trade interfered, were Mr. *Rumbold* and the gentlemen of the *Patna*-factory. This was in the articles of the Company's staple-imports, and in opium.

The merchants from the high country, who had been used to resort to *Patna*, could now be supplied with woollen goods, and other staple commodities at *Banaras* and *Mirzapore*, and thereby save themselves the expence and trouble of a journey of one hundred and twenty miles. With respect to opium, the *Patna*-gentlemen had been used to supply the market of *Calcutta* with that commodity, which was ever considered as a capital part of their profits. No other province produced the genuine opium required by the traders to *Mallacca* and the eastern islands; for the other species, from *Baghelpore*, *Purnea*, and *Rungpore*, was in bad repute. The districts wherein the writer's opium was made, were only separated from the *Patna*-province by the river *Caramnassa*. There could, therefore, be no doubt entertained of the genuine goodness of the opium, so far as it depended upon the soil and climate; although in the first season it might prove somewhat defective, from such difficulties as generally occur in new undertakings of importance. The *Patna*-gentlemen, however, were surprized, in *November* 1766, by the writer's importing three hundred chests at *Calcutta*, before they had brought a single one to market, and at a time too when it sold for four hundred *Arcot* rupees per chest.

A fourth set of gentlemen of the Council, with General *Smith* at the head of them, although at that time it was unknown to the



writer, had formed a plan for dispossessing him of his trade in salt-petre, as will hereafter be shewn.

It may be here necessary to inform the reader, that it was ever the custom for those covenant-servants, who had resigned the service of the Company in *Bengal*, to be permitted to reside there, unmolested, as long as they pleased, in the capacity, and with the privileges of free-merchants. Moreover, the writer being a judge in the Mayor's Court, agreeably to the royal charter, he was expressly invested with the right of residence in *Bengal* for life, under the protection of the Company, and was irremoveable from his judicial seat, except for legal cause. But as such constitutional security was insufficient for the protection of any man against the arbitrary mandates of the most noble President, and his sagacious Council, they were pleased to cause the following letter to be sent to him.

“ To Mr. *William Bolts*.

“ S I R,

“ I am directed, by the Right Honourable the President and Council, to signify to you, that *as you have resigned the Company's service, and cannot claim any title to remain longer in India, you are positively not to engage further in commercial concerns, and to prepare to embark for England in one of the Company's returning ships of this season.*

“ I am, S I R,

“ *Fort William,*
“ *the 5th Jan. 1767.*” “ Your most obedient servant,
“ (Signed) WILLIAM ALDERSEY, - Sec.”

To manifest more fully the iniquity of this order, it is proper here to remark, that when any *European* merchant in *Bengal* resolves to quit trade, in order to embark for *Europe*, it necessarily requires two or more years to liquidate and finish his commercial concerns; for which purpose it had likewise been the *invariable* practice to allow the servant, so resigning, the privilege even of dusticks, for twelve months from the time of his resignation. Whereas, to have complied with that order, the writer must have embarked within two months, as no ships would have been dispatched at a later period of the season.

There never had been an instance of such an order being given, in *Bengal*, at any former period, from the first establishment of the Company to that day. Their superior servants never before presumed to think they had a right to order any man to desist from trading,



trading, or in other words, from pursuing the means of his existence, who was lawfully resident in *India*. The authorities already produced, in the preceding chapter, fully prove such an order to have been as repugnant to the spirit and letter of the regulations established by former Courts of Directors, as it was contrary to natural-justice. Even the Directors themselves could have no right suddenly to withdraw the privilege for which the writer had expressly covenanted with them, on his going out to *India*; and much less could their servants possess such an authority. But had the Directors even possessed such a right, yet, as hath been before observed, nothing could have rendered an order of that kind warrantable, from the President and Council, but the official signatures of thirteen, or more Directors of the Company; and that too *for legal reasons, expressly assigned*.

Although the writer was fully sensible of the illegality of the proceeding, he did not enter upon that subject with the President and Council. Being at that time seriously resolved to quit business, and return to *Europe* as soon as it might be in his power, he was unwilling to add strength to the unmerited malice of his persecutors, from envy at his success. Besides, he was actually afraid of sudden violence, from the treatment he had already met with, and the recent examples before him.—Many of the superior servants of the Company had been condemned unheard by the Committee.—The inhabitants, both natives and *Europeans*, were frequently seized, and arbitrarily confined by military-force, within the *British* settlement, without any accusation, or form of legal process.—Sometimes such imprisonments were made under the pretence of their being for the advantage of *the country-government*; at others, of the Company's. But any pretence was thought sufficient for imprisonment or release, as either quadrated with the views of the Select Committee, or even those of their meanest instruments.

Nundcomár, who, while prime minister to the Nabob, had, like others, been brought down to *Calcutta* and there confined by the former President and Council, upon an accusation of *treasonable* correspondence with the enemies of the Company, had been set at liberty, without any trial, *because* he was found a necessary tool to the Select Committee.

Cayem Beg, a favourite and general also of the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah's*, was seized * at *Murshedabad*, brought down and con-

* See Lord Clive's letter to the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah*, dated the 6th July 1765. Appendix B. Num. I. page 286.



ned at *Calcutta*, for the interest of that *Nabob*; because, as was alleged, he had frightened the ministers who had been imposed upon his master.

Groups of *Englishmen* were suddenly sent to prison; because it was alleged they had sold spirituous liquors.

Several *English* gentlemen were shut up in their * houses, for the purpose of being sent, when convenient, by force to *England*; because they had formerly been military officers, and in a general resignation had given up their commissions, in a manner which the Committee deemed mutinous, though they were then under no covenants for service.

Mooteram, a *Hindoo*, and man of family, who had been lately appointed *Fowzdar* of *Hoogly*, through the interest of Mr. *John Johnstone*, one of the Council, together with *Bussuntroy*, his *dewan*, were suddenly † imprisoned; because the Committee were pleased to judge they were deeply concerned in the pecuniary transactions

* Appendix A. Num. XX. page 126.

† Extract from the Proceedings of the Select Committee, held at *Calcutta* the 7th of June 1765.

Present, The Right Honourable *Robert Lord Clive*, President,
William Brightwell Sumner,
Harry Verelst, and
Francis Sykes, Esquires.

“ Upon advice being received, that certain bills, specified in *Mahommed Reza Khawn*’s attested accounts, and there said to be received, had been since offered back to the said *Mahommed Reza Khawn*, by one *Bussuntroy*, employed for that purpose by *Mooteram*, *Fowzdar* of *Hoogly*.

“ The Committee, judging such voluntary restitution to be of a very extraordinary nature, and suspecting it was designed to screen *Mooteram* from detection, and cover transactions with which it might highly concern the public to be acquainted,

“ Resolve, that the said *Bussuntroy* be seized, brought before the Committee, and sworn to answer truly to such questions as shall be proposed to him.”

On the 8th June 1765.

“ It appearing from the evidences of *Mahommed Reza Khawn* and *Juggut Seat*, and also from the deposition of *Bussuntroy*, that *Mooteram*, *Fowzdar* of *Hoogly*, was deeply concerned in all the pecuniary transactions specified in those evidences, bills to a great amount having been drawn in his favour,

“ The Committee resolve, that he be sent for, sworn, and examined in their presence, and also, that he be confronted by *Mahommed Reza Khawn* and *Juggut Seat*, in order that it may appear with certainty, whether the said *Mooteram* was authorized to demand money of the *Seats*, or whether he presumed to prostitute the characters of the gentlemen of the deputation, by making use of their names, without the sanction of their express authority.”



between the Nabob and the *English* deputies, and were going to make a voluntary restitution of an improper and extraordinary nature.

Ramnaut, another *Hindoo*, and a merchant, who had acted as banyan, or dewan to Mr. *George Gray*, likewise a member of the Council, was also suddenly seized and imprisoned by the Committee; *because* it was alleged he was * “a most notorious offender,” who had been guilty of extortion and other great crimes in the inferior country. And although those crimes were said, by the President and Committee, to have been committed at *Maldab*, within the Nabob’s jurisdiction, they found it convenient to keep the man confined many months within their own at *Calcutta*.

The reasons assigned by the noble Lord *Clive* and the Select Committee, as well in justification of this first imprisonment of *Ramnaut*, as for the necessity of employing military force on such occasions; with the arguments of his Lordship’s opponents, may be seen at large in the † Appendix. Notwithstanding artful pretences, a discerning and unprejudiced reader, on reference thereto, will readily perceive, that the object of the Committee in their imprisonment of both those *Hindoos*, was, in support of their system, more for the extortion of evidence from the prisoners against the gentlemen of the former Council, than the good of the Company, or the advantage of the country.

But it is not the writer’s intention to examine into the disputes that subsisted between the gentlemen of the former Council and the Select Committee. All he means to infer and shew, applicable to his own case is, that in the *British* settlement of *Calcutta*, at the period under consideration, there was no security of persons or property; that even the outward forms of justice, which are usually preserved, for appearance-sake, in the worst of governments, were not attended to; and that the Right Honourable President, his Committee and Council, had set the laws of *England* at absolute defiance, proclaiming they were not bound by them in *India*, and acting accordingly by arbitrary will.

The noble Lord had ‡ declared, that he would not submit to the

* Appendix A. page 73.

† Ibid. Letter A. Num. XVI. particularly page 75, &c.

‡ Extract from the Case of Mr. William Vertue.

“Mr. *Vertue* intended to proceed against Lord *Clive*, but his Lordship refusing to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts there, Mr. *Vertue* could get no attorney to be concerned



the jurisdiction of the *British* Courts of Justice in *Bengal*: and at a meeting, in which the matter had been solemnly discussed, Mr. *Verelst*, and the rest of the justices, gave it as their unanimous opinion, that * “OPPRESSIONS COMMITTED BY THE PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL WERE NOT COGNIZABLE BY ANY CIVIL AUTHORITY IN INDIA.”

It is not, therefore, straining our argument to assert, that the writer, or any other inhabitant of the *British* settlements in *Bengal*, who at that time had disputed the legality of their orders, however oppressive or illegal, would have had more to fear from the *disinterested state-craft* of the immaculate Select Committee, who had in view no other objects than the temporal prosperity of the *East India* Company, and the welfare of the natives; than any subject, in the most bigotted state of *Europe*, during the darkest times of superstition, ever had to dread from the *religious priest-craft* of an *holy* inquisition, who never had in view any other objects than the glory of a merciful God, and the spiritual happiness of mankind!

“concerned for him, as appears by letters in his custody, which he received from four different attornies on the occasion; of which that from Mr. *George Sparks* is the most particular, saying, “That on the 21st *October* 1766, he waited on Lord *Clive*, and acquainted him, that Mr. *Vertue* had desired he would bring an action of trespass, for assault and false imprisonment, against Lord *Clive* and all persons concerned therein; and that Lord *Clive*’s answer was, *that if he had injured Mr. Vertue, THE KING’S BENCH was open to him*, and that the court there had no authority to call the Governor, or Council, to account *for any thing they did*, and that he would not answer there; that he supposed *Sparks* had read the act of parliament on that head, and that he advised *Sparks* to have nothing to say to the affair.”

* See the proceedings of a Bench of Justices at *Calcutta* on the 8th of *September* 1766; at which were present, *Harry Verelst*, *Randolph Marriott*, *Hugh Watts*, *Clawd Russell*, *William Aldersey*, *Thomas Kelsall*, and *Charles Ffloyer*, Esquires. Appendix A. Num. XX. page 129.



CONSIDERATIONS ON

CHAP. III.

CONTAINING Transactions between the late GOVERNING-SERVANTS of the COMPANY in BENGAL, and the WRITER; from his being first ordered to repair to ENGLAND in *January* 1767, until their Imprisonment, in *March* 1768, of the ARMENIAN MERCHANTS, who acted as his mercantile Agents.

THE writer's reasons for not entering upon the illegality of the order of the 5th *January* 1767, which he received from Lord Clive and his Council, have already been assigned. Being anxious to return to *Europe*, he diligently employed himself in concluding his mercantile concerns and collecting his outstanding effects. This, however, it was impossible for him to do, without the effectual assistance of the President and Council. The *country-government*, as the Pageant-Nabob and his pretended ministers were called, was no other than a delusion; for the laws of the country had in every respect been entirely subverted, and all real power assumed by the President and Select Committee at *Calcutta*. When, therefore, he found it absolutely necessary to apply for assistance in liquidating his affairs, the writer addressed a respectful * letter to the President and Council, in which he gave them a general account of his outstanding concerns, and expressed his cheerfulness, while bringing them to an end, in submitting to the regulations established by the Company in those places to which their jurisdiction extended, and to the laws and customs of *Hindustan* in such countries as were independent of their authority.

In the letter referred to, it will be observed, that a promise was made that the writer would not enter into any new inland-dealings. But this could not be fairly construed to mean, that he should not bring down to *Calcutta* such goods as were already manufactured, and then laying ready for that purpose; or to preclude him in the recovery of outstanding debts, from receiving goods in payment, where his debtors could not pay in money. With the most assiduous and successful application, two years, at

* See Appendix F. Num. I. page 434.



least, would be necessary for accomplishing such transactions. But it was a promise which the writer made solely for his own convenience, no man or set of men being affected by it, as parties, or having a legal right to enforce its execution. Nevertheless, it was then sincerely made; but so oppressive was the posterior conduct of the President and members of the Council towards him, that by rendering it impossible for him to comply with it, they virtually absolved him from the obligations thereof, and forced his continuance in the country, against his inclination; as will be more fully made appear in the course of these sheets.

After the expiration of near a month, the President and Select Committee found leisure to take into consideration the writer's letter of the 9th *February* 1767; their proceedings whereon are inserted in the * APPENDIX. Candour can require no stronger proof of the ambiguous and undetermined state of the DOUBLE-GOVERNMENT in *Bengal* at that period, than is exhibited in those proceedings; wherein the President and Select Committee direct their *Cutcherry* at *Calcutta* to examine into the claims upon *Zemindars* in the interior country, where it could possess no jurisdiction. Upon being informed of this determination of the Committee, the writer acquainted their Secretary with the evident inconsistency thereof, and thereupon other proceedings relative to this business were held by the Committee on the † 10th *March* 1767; and he was, in consequence thereof, informed by a letter from the Secretary, that for the adjustment of his claims in the interior provinces, the President would grant *perwânahs* to the *Indian* Courts of the several districts where the demands were made; from which he might *appeal to the MINISTERS AND RESIDENT at the Durbar*.

In an application which he had had occasion to make a few months before, the writer had already experienced the appeal to the MINISTERS to be a mere juggle. The occasion was the stoppage of some of his boats by an officer, or MINISTER, at *Ragemahl*; who likewise extorted one hundred rupees from the boat-people, and would neither release the boats or return the money, without an order from Mr. ‡ Sykes, then Resident at the *Durbar*.

However, in consequence of this application from the writer to the Committee, Governor *Verelst* was pleased, on the 9th *March*

* See Appendix F. Num. II.

† Ibid. Num. III.

‡ Appendix B. Num. V. page 282.



1767, to give him letters to the Nabob *Sajah al Dowlah*, and the Rajah *Burwanjeng*, of which he himself has given * extracts to the public; but his letters were so filled with intimations to those Princes, to withdraw future protection, and forbid the further residence of the writer's people, that, in a country where the most distant hint is sufficient from a man in power to urge the perpetration of any act, the letters he received from Mr. *Verelst* would have done him infinite prejudice, had he not possessed the good-will of the Princes to whom they were directed.

The perwânahs to the Rajahs and Zemindars of the country were received a month afterwards. They were under the hands and seals of Mr. *Verelst* and Mr. *Cartier*, and directed in the most authoritative style.—Therein the Select Committee-gentlemen departed from their usual caution, of acting under the cloak of the Nabob, which had been so strongly recommended to them on the † 16th *January* 1767 by Lord *Clive*; which Mr. *Verelst* and the rest of the Committee had resolved, on the ‡ 5th *February* 1767, so strictly to adhere to; and of which judicious system the Court of *East India* Directors afterwards so fully § approved. In these perwânahs, the Zemindars were also strongly prohibited from permitting the writer to have any dealings or traffick whatever. The Zemindars and other natives were ready to furnish goods for what they were indebted to him, but they alleged, that they had not ready money sufficient to pay the extraordinary demands which were made on them for the Company's revenues. Those perwanahs, therefore, remained of no use to the writer, who consequently did not receive the least benefit from Mr. *Verelst's* boasted || *assistance for the settlement of his affairs*.

Equally ineffectual was every other application of the writer's to the President and Council, for assistance in obtaining payment of his outstanding debts, which could not be otherwise recovered. Upon the Committee's establishment of the monopoly of salt, beetle-nut, and tobacco, the whole system of the government and collections, in those countries which produced salt, was suddenly reversed. The Zemindars were prohibited from contracting with, and the

* *Verelst's View*, Appendix, page 195.

† See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 914.

‡ Ibid. page 915.

§ See a letter from the Court of Directors to the President and Select Committee at *Fort William*, in *Bengal*. Appendix A. Num. XXXI. page 166.

|| *Verelst's View*, page 41.



salt-boilers from working for any persons but those appointed by the Committee. Their salt-grounds which, according to ancient customs, were usually pledged to the last contractor till his balances were worked out, were now forcibly taken from the persons who alone had a legal-right to dispose of them. The first natural consequence of this innovation could be no other than what happened,—the failure of the Zemindars in the payment of their customary revenues, as being no longer at liberty to make the most of their grounds. Another consequence was, the depriving of many of the country-merchants, as well as *Europeans*, who had not interest with the ruling party, of all prospect of ever recovering their outstanding balances.

The first application for assistance in this difficulty, in which the writer was concerned, was * on behalf of Mr. *John Johnstone*, who had balances due to him in the districts, as called, of *the country-government*, on contracts that had been made before the establishment by the Committee, of their exclusive trade in salt. This affair was referred, by Mr. *Verelst* and the Select Committee, to Mr. *Sykes*, then Resident at the *Durbar*; but was afterwards taken up by Mr. *Verelst* himself, when present with Mr. *Sykes* at the *Durbar*; and in a report from those gentlemen, dated † *Mootejil*, the 28th *June* 1767, referred back to Mr. *Verelst* and the Committee; who, on the ‡ 13th *October* 1767, came to a resolution, that they could give no assistance in the recovery of Mr. *Johnstone's* balances.

But the nature of such references to *the ministers and Resident at the Durbar* will be more fully understood by the intelligent reader, when he is informed, that although the President and members of the Select Committee, at this time, did not think THE GOVERNMENT responsible for the claims made by other gentlemen, for balances due on their contracts for salt, alleging their advances had not been made *on the public account*; they had taken care to secure the payment of similar balances due to themselves and their friends, by a tax levied § upon the natives.

The next application made by the writer, was for the obtaining payment of balances due upon certain salt-grounds in the Company's twenty-four pergunahs, which, in the year 1764, under the sanction of the orders of the board, when the salt-trade was

* Appendix F. Num. IV. page 438.

† Ibid. A. page 159.

‡ Ibid. F. Num. XVI. page 449.

§ Ibid. A. Num. XXXV. page 173.



open to every one, the writer had occupied, and worked jointly with *Charles Stafford Playdell* and *Samuel Middleton*, Esquires.—The writer being the acting partner in this concern, his agents at *Calcutta*, during his absence had, in consequence of certain regulations of the board, so early as the 12th *July* 1766, made application for these balances to the Collector General, then *William Brightwell Sumner*, Esq; but without effect.

After the expiration of eight months from the said first application, that is, on the 27th *March* 1767, a joint * letter was written on this occasion from the partners, *Playdell*, *Middleton*, and *Bolts*, to the President and Council.

There was at this time a small demand subsisting against the writer, for damaged rice, the remains of what had been provided on the Company's account for the army at *Illahabad*, and which he had bought at a sale made by the pay-master at *Banâras*.—A difficulty had arisen relative to the *butta*, or difference of exchange, between the rupees of that province and those of *Calcutta*, on which account this demand had for some time lain dormant.

Without taking notice of the application of the 27th *March* 1767, from the partners *Playdell*, *Middleton*, and *Bolts*, the President and Council thought proper to order their Secretary, on the 14th † *April* 1767, to exact from the writer full payment of their demand against him, for damaged rice; and so very pressing were they on this trifling affair, that, without giving him time to answer their Secretary's first letter, on the next morning they sent him another, ‡ positively demanding immediate payment. This proceeding was altogether unusual and unaccountable; however, without deviating from the respect due to the board, the writer ventured, on the 15th *April* 1767, to send them a § letter, setting forth the nature of the transaction, which had been misrepresented to them, together with his account-current, in which he had placed one demand against the other, and therewith, in a || letter to Mr. Secretary *Droz*, tendered the balance due from him.

The conclusion of this affair of the salt and rice-balances, which terminated in the entire disgrace of the President and Council, will be shewn in the following sheets. In the mean time we must

* See Appendix F. Num. V. page 439.

† Ibid. Num. VI.

‡ Ibid. Num. VII.

§ Ibid. Num. VIII.

|| Ibid. Num. IX.



inform the reader, that Colonel *Richard Smith* having taken leave of the board at *Calcutta*, on the 27th *March* 1767, proceeded up to the brigade of his command at *Illahabad*. During his stay at *Calcutta* he had been advised by Governor *Verelst* to engage in * trade, in partnership with Mr. *Claud Russell*, who, as well as the Colonel, had been lately admitted a member of the Select Committee. Their first commercial adventure was in the purchase of Mr. *Verelst*'s share of the cargoes of cotton imported from *Surat*, already mentioned, which they bought at an advance of fifty thousand rupees on what it had cost the Governor. The Colonel's second engagement was in fundry staple-articles bought at the Company's auction at *Calcutta*, and transported into the provinces of *Illahabad*, and *Owd*, where the greatest part was afterwards sold at high prices to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*. The third undertaking between the Colonel and Mr. *Russell* was that already mentioned in saltpetre, to be provided also in the provinces where the Colonel's troops were stationed; for which business, they appointed a gomastah, named *Ismaelbeg*. This concern was likewise so far approved of by Governor *Verelst*, that at the request of Mr. *Russell*, he wrote a letter to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, and obtained from him, in favour of those gentlemen, a perwânah, or grant for their gomastah, *Ismaelbeg*, to have the *exclusive privilege* of purchasing all the saltpetre produced in that Prince's dominions.

The prospect of success under these great advantages, and the favourable advices relative to this undertaking, which were received from Captain *Gabriel Harper*, the Colonel's Aid de Camp, and partner in the concern, who was stationed with a detachment of troops at *Fyzabad*, with the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, appeared so very flattering, that some time afterwards Messrs. *Smith* and *Russell* proposed to allow shares in the adventure to several other † members of the Council; to which measure they were probably

* See an account of the Colonel's commercial concerns, in his letter to Governor *Verelst*, dated the 8th *February* 1768. Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. pages 938 and 939.

† Agreeably to the best information that the writer could obtain, the subdivided shares on the planning of this intended monopoly were as follow :

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| To Col. <i>Richard Smith</i> , and the gentlemen of his suite, Capt. <i>Harper</i> and others, | 8 |
| <i>Claud Russell</i> , Esq; | 2 |
| <i>Thomas Kelsall</i> and <i>William Aldersey</i> , Esquires, | 2 |
| <i>Charles Ffloyer</i> , Esq; | 2 |
| | <hr/> |

Shares 8
induced



induced with a view of securing their interest to protect the projected business at the Presidency.

The regular and periodical succession of facts made it requisite to introduce this short account of these commercial engagements planned by the Colonel and gentlemen of the Council, as having a most intimate connexion with the case of the writer; who, notwithstanding the repeated injuries and provocations he had received, had, on no occasion, manifested the slightest disrespect towards the President and Council; and much less had he been guilty of any conduct that could be in the least prejudicial or injurious to the Company. But freedom from guilt afforded no security against punishments, under the administration of the President and Select Committee of *Calcutta* at this period. While peaceably employed on the duties of his station as a judge in the Mayor's Court, and on the conclusion of his mercantile affairs, he was surprized by a sentence equally unexpected and injurious, whereby the Committee had condemned him to the severest punishment next to death; that of banishment, *unacquainted with any charge, unopposed with any accuser, and unheard in his defence.*

The whole of the allegations contained in this sentence were infamously false. But the absurdity and inconsistency of the proceedings of the Secret Committee in this transaction cannot be set in a stronger light than by the sentence itself, as delivered to the writer by Mr. *Alexander Campbell* on the 29th April 1767; wherein he was condemned for what the Committee supposed he would commit, as follows:

An Extract from the Proceedings of the Select Committee. Dated the 18th April 1767.

“ That Mr. *William Bolts* appears, from many circumstances, to
 “ be deeply concerned in the conspiracy to ruin *Nobekissen's* cha-
 “ racter and attempt his life; in which opinion the Committee are
 “ confirmed by his violent and declared resentment to *Nobekissen*;
 “ by the share he took in stirring up and instigating a prosecution
 “ against him in the Zemindary Court, upon an imaginary and
 “ false-accusation; and particularly from his taking, at this jun-
 “ ture, into his service *Ramnaut*, a man who stands publicly
 “ convicted of perjury, with a view of forging and publishing
 “ further aspersions upon *Nobekissen's* character. That Mr. *Bolts*,
 “ having upon this and many other occasions endeavoured to draw
 “ an



“ an odium upon the administration, and to promote faction and
 “ discontent in the settlement, has rendered himself unworthy of
 “ any further indulgence from the Committee, and of the Com-
 “ pany’s protection. That, therefore, he be directed to quit *Ben-*
 “ *gal*, and to proceed to *Madras* by the first ship that shall sail
 “ for that Presidency in the month of *July* next, in order to take
 “ his passage from thence to *Europe* in *September*.

A true Extract.

(Signed) C. W. BOUGHTON,
 Assist. Sec. Select Comm.”

The writer was not so much affected at the unparalleled injustice of this sudden and unexpected sentence, at the time of receiving it, as he was at a subsequent period, when he discovered that a gentleman, then a member of the Committee, his most intimate and particular *friend*, had not recorded on their proceedings, either his dissent to the sentence passed, or even a minute, moving for the writer’s being heard in his own defence, before condemned.—But it was his hard fate, in *India*, to be betrayed even by his * bosom-friends.—However, with a conscience void of offence to others, he shewed such resolute firmness under the injuries he daily received, as hath forced even Mr. *Verelst* to acknowledge, to his honour, † “ that his public concerns never intruded upon his private cares.”

The President and Council still continued to harass the writer for the amount of their demand for rice, but would give him no satisfaction for the salt-balances due to himself and partners. In another letter from Mr. Secretary ‡ *Droz*, dated the 27th *April* 1767, they alleged that the Company kept *no open account with any individual*, and therefore insisted that he should pay off the debit side of their account against him; and referred him, in the most vague and ambiguous manner, to their own officers for payment of the credit side, in his favour.

The reader will please to remark, that the balance due from the salt-pans to the writer and his partners Messrs. *Playdell* and *Middle-*

* Even this single reflection of a private nature would not have escaped from the writer, but as a comment on Mr. *Verelst*’s remark; though he could very readily furnish matter that would tend greatly to the heightening of even such a character as that of *Esquire Paunceford*, recorded by Doctor *Smollett* in *Hampley’s Gleaner*, vol. 1. pages 138 to 145.

† *Verelst*’s View. page 39

‡ See Appendix F. Num. X. page 442.



tion, according to the account made up and delivered in *July* 1766, was no less a sum than current rupces 45,273. 1. 9. or nearly five thousand pounds sterling; and from the conduct of the President and Council, which hath already been represented, it must evidently appear, that no rational reliance could be made on their justice, for settling an account which had so long lain before them disregarded. He therefore wrote them another letter, * on the 27th *April* 1767, in which he positively refused to pay more than the balance which had already been tendered, till he was made acquainted with the resolution of the board relative to the salt-balances.

In consequence of that letter, the President and Council immediately commenced a prosecution in the Mayor's Court at *Calcutta*, by a bill, which they filed on the 8th of *May* 1767, against the writer; who gave in a full answer, upon oath, on the 26th of *June* following. With his answer, he likewise tendered into Court a bag, containing current rupces 3,175. 7. 9. the entire balance appearing to be due from him according to his stated accounts, in full satisfaction of the complainants demand; which Mr. *Thomas Morris*, their attorney, refused to accept.

Upon a motion made by Mr. *Morris*, on the 14th *August* 1767, in the Mayor's Court, it was ordered, that the cause should be set down to be heard upon bill and answer; and on the 6th *October* 1767, it was decreed against the writer, who thereupon appealed it to the Court of Appeals.

This Court, consisting of the President and Council only, it was scarcely to be expected, that they, who were parties against the appellant, would decree the cause against themselves. Accordingly, on the 2d of *March* 1768, when the appeal came to a hearing in court, at which were present *John Cartier*, *Richard Becher*, *James Alexander*, *Claud Russell*, and *William Aldersey*, Esquires, they were of course pleased to confirm the decree of the Mayor's Court.

In such cases, from the constitution of the courts at that time, there was little chance of any subject's procuring redress in *India*; and, consequently, there was no prospect of obtaining justice, unless the aggrieved party, upon a tedious and expensive appeal, could bring his cause before the august Tribunal of the Sovereign in Council, here in *England*.

* Appendix F. Num. XI. page 443.



Reduced to this last resource, after giving the necessary security, he appealed his cause to the King's most Excellent Majesty in Council. But the Court of *East India* Directors were so much ashamed of the conduct of Governor *Verelst*, and his colleagues in this affair, that they did not think it * *prudent for the Company to bring the appeal before the Lords*; and even their Solicitor appeared "† *sorry, that the writer had met with so much vexation and delay*" on that occasion.

Having been obliged, for perspicuity sake, to trace this transaction from its commencement to its conclusion, we will now recur back to *April 1767*, the period from whence we set off in this digression.

Every engine that the most inveterate malice could contrive was now employed against the writer. A native of the country, named *Philip Pollock*, who had been formerly employed as an agent in the commercial affairs of the partnership of *Johnstone, Hay, and Bolts*, of which he would not render a regular account, and whose fidelity they had great reason to suspect, was pitched upon as a proper instrument on that occasion. This man, who would not have dared to proceed in a hostile manner against any of his former employers, who had ever treated him with great indulgence, without being privately given to understand that he should be powerfully supported, was instigated to prefer an indictment against the writer, at the general quarter sessions of Oyer and Terminer, for forcibly, as he alleged, breaking open his house, and stealing his papers.

This transaction, which was nothing but an oblique attack of power on the writer, through Mr. *Pollock*, was of so curious a nature, that we have given copies in the ‡ APPENDIX of all the papers which passed on that occasion. The writer was actually obliged to carry with him to the *acting Justice* Mr. *Claud Russell*, bail for his appearance, and for standing his trial at the sessions. But as Mr. Justice *Russell*, upon further scrutiny, found this affair would not stand the test of inquiry, nor answer the purpose intended, it was therefore dropped; but Mr. *Pollock* was encouraged, from the enmity which he perceived prevailed among the members of the Council against the writer, to persist in a deviation from

* See Appendix F. Num. LI. page 540.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. D. pages 341 to 344.



his duty, and to obstruct the adjustment of the partnership-accounts; so that it was not in the writer's power to conclude those concerns during the remainder of the short time which the Governor and Council thought proper to allow him for remaining in *Bengal*.

Although, in pages 56 and 67 we have given a cursory account of the saltpetre-concern, planned and agreed upon between Colonel *Richard Smith* and Mr. *Claud Russell*, at the recommendation of Mr. *Verelst*, before the Colonel left *Calcutta*, in *March* 1767, yet, as hath been observed, at that period the circumstances of the engagement were not known to the writer. He met indeed with great obstructions in the conclusion of his business in all parts of the provinces of *Illahabad* and *Owd*, but he did not then know, that *Ismaelbeg*, who occasioned them, was not only protected, but actually employed by the copartners, Messrs. *Smith* and *Russell*. The commander of the brigade then at *Illahabad* was the most proper person to apply to on this occasion, and one whom the writer least of all suspected, at that time, in this business. He therefore wrote a * letter to Colonel *Smith*, requesting his assistance in the difficulties under which he laboured. A perusal of the letter here referred to, will not only serve to shew the reader the then state of this business, but also to convince him, that the writer behaved on this occasion with the utmost openness and candour. But he received no answer from Colonel *Smith*, while the attacks upon his people and property, on the part of *Ismaelbeg*, became daily more violent. Not knowing who else to apply to for assistance, on the 19th *June* 1767, he wrote a letter to one *Monf. Gentil*, a *French* gentleman, who resided at the Court of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, to whom he had been particularly recommended by † General *Carnac*. This letter, which was written in *French*, being entirely on the subject of the writer's private concerns, would have been too unimportant to lay before the reader, if it had not been made a pretence, by Colonel *Smith* and the President *Verelst* and his Council, for a charge against him, of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with the enemies of the Company. For this purpose it was laid before a Committee of the Honourable ‡ House of Commons, and for this purpose when translated into *English*, at *Calcutta*, the *French* word § *associé*, where it meant simply, a

* Appendix E. Num. I. page 345.

† See a letter from the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* to Governor *Verelst*, relative to this *Monf. Gentil*, dated the 12th *March* 1767. Appendix B. Num. IV. page 287.

‡ See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 919.

§ Appendix F. Num. XXII. page 481.



partner in trade, was construed, “associate,” or *conspirator*. This insignificant letter, therefore, being by such means magnified into consequence, makes it necessary, on account of what will follow, to trouble the reader with a reference to the translation of it in the

* APPENDIX.

The next extraordinary transaction was on the 24th of *August* 1767. At a consultation held that day, at which were present, *Harry Verelst*, Esq; President, with *Messrs. John Cartier, Richard Becker, James Alexander, Claud Russell, William Aldersey, Charles Eflayer*, and *Alexander Campbell*; the writer, although still a judge of the Mayor’s Court, was ordered immediately to proceed to *Europe*, as was intimated to him by the following letter from their Secretary.

“ To Mr. *William Bolts*.

“ S I R,

“ I am directed, by the Honourable the President and Council, to acquaint you, it is their orders that you proceed to *Europe* on board the *Lord Holland*, which will be dispatched in the course of this month.

I am, S I R,

Fort William,
the 24th Aug. 1767.

Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) SIMEON DROZ, Sec.”

The state of persecution under which the writer laboured, could not be an agreeable situation to him. But however desirous he was of quitting *Bengal*, it was utterly impossible for him safely to do it, without first securing his own property, and the effects of other persons with which he had been entrusted. It was then the duty of the President and Council, who appeared so very solicitous that he should quit the country, at least to provide for the security of all such property. Had they done this, the writer would not only have embarked within one month, as he actually proposed to them to do, but would also have put the envious and malicious members of the Council in peaceable possession of all his trade, warehouses, and manufactories; upon which subjects, on the 29th † *August* 1767, he wrote them a letter.

But the board did not appear to think it worth their while to consider either of the private concerns of the writer, or of those per-

* Appendix E. Num. II. page 347.

† Ibid. F. Num. XII. page 413.



sons for whom he acted. In the 51st paragraph of their general letter, of the 14th *September* 1767, by the *Lord Holland*, they addressed the Court of Directors in the following words :

“ In consequence of the resolution taken by the Select Committee (meaning their sentence of the 18th *April* 1767) regarding Mr. *William Bolts*, we have sent him also positive directions to leave the country, and repair to *Europe* this season.”

In the mean time, every tool was employed by Governor *Verelst* and his Council to contrive matters of complaint against the writer, that might carry an appearance of justifying their conduct towards him, in the eyes of the Courts of *East India* Directors, without the least foundation in truth ; several instances of which will presently be made appear.

The board did not take the writer's letter of the 29th *August* into their consideration before the 1st of *October* ensuing, on which day the following proceedings were held :

“ At a Consultation held at *Calcutta* the 1st *October* 1767,

Present, The Hon. *Harry Verelst*, Esq; President,

John Cartier,

Richard Becher.

James Alexander,

Claud Russell,

William Aldersey,

Charles Ffloyer, and

Alexander Campbell, Esquires.

“ Two letters from Mr. *William Bolts*, one to the board and the other to the Secretary, are now read, as entered after these minutes, being in answer to the letter wrote him the 24th *August*, by our order, on the subject of his returning to *Europe*. He herein assigns the situation of his private affairs to be such as render his immediate departure impossible ; but assures the board, that as soon as they are adjusted he shall with pleasure obey their orders.

“ *Ordered*, The Secretary do acquaint Mr. *Bolts*, that after the indulgence he has already had, his private concerns are no inducements for us to recede from our orders, and we therefore expect that he will embark in the next ship that sails for *Europe*. Further, that we hear he is carrying on an improper inter-
“ course



“ course with the *Dutch*, to the prejudice of the Honourable Com-
 “ pany’s affairs, and on that account positively forbid his leaving
 “ *Calcutta* without our express permission.

“ *Ordered*, That the Mayor’s Court be acquainted herewith,
 “ that they apply for another Alderman in his room.”

The letters written on this occasion to the writer and the Mayor’s Court were as follow:

“ To Mr. *William Bolts*.

“ S I R,

“ I am directed by the Honourable the President and Council to
 “ acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th *August*, and to
 “ acquaint you, that your private concerns, after the indulgence
 “ you have already had, can be no inducement for them to recede
 “ from their orders: the board do expect that you will embark in
 “ the next ship that sails for *Europe*.

“ The board have further ordered me to acquaint you, that *they*
 “ *have heard* you are carrying on an *improper intercourse with the*
 “ *Dutch*, to the prejudice of the Company’s affairs; they do there-
 “ fore positively forbid the same, and *direct*, that you do not again
 “ *leave Calcutta without their express permission*.

I am, S I R,

Fort William,
the 1st October 1767.

Your most obedient servant,
 (Signed) SIMEON DROZ, Sec.”

“ To *John Holme*, Esq; Register to the Honourable the Mayor’s
 “ Court of *Calcutta*.

“ S I R,

“ I am directed by the Honourable the President and Council
 “ to request you will acquaint the Honourable the Mayor’s Court,
 “ that they have directed Mr. *William Bolts*, now an Alderman of
 “ their Court, to proceed to *Europe* by the next ship that sails
 “ from hence. They give the Honourable Court this notice, that
 “ they may, *if they please*, apply for another Alderman in his room;
 “ and to acquaint them, that on their so doing, their request shall
 “ be immediately complied with.

I am, S I R,

Fort William,
the 1st October 1767.

Your most obedient servant,
 (Signed) SIMEON DROZ, Sec.”



The ridicule and contempt which the Governor and Council drew upon themselves in the settlement, by the above proceedings, were beyond description. The writer was ordered, on the 18th *April* 1767, to proceed to *Madras*. On the 24th of *August* 1767 he was ordered to repair to *Europe*, on the ship *Lord Holland*, and on the 1st of *October* 1767 he was ordered to proceed to *Europe* on the next ship that should sail; although those gentlemen had been informed by him, that he could not, and knew that he would not comply with any such orders, unless his property and that of his employers were first secured. To complete the absurdity of their conduct, although the writer had already received their repeated orders to quit *Bengal*, yet on this 1st of *October* 1767 the President and Council were pleased to direct, that he should *not* leave *Calcutta* without express permission.

In their letter to the gentlemen of the Mayor's Court, the President and Council had given them a *hint* to apply, "if they pleased," for another Alderman, in the writer's room. But however observant they might be of a *hint* from a Governor on other occasions subsequent to this, yet in the present case every member of the Court felt for his own situation. They were therefore pleased to order the following letter to be written by their Register on this business :

"To *Simeon Drex*, Esq; Secretary.

"S. I R,

"This morning I received your letter of the 1st instant; which
 "I immediately laid before the honourable the Mayor's Court, who
 "directed me to acquaint you, in answer thereto, that when Mr.
 "Bolts's seat, as an Alderman, becomes vacant, the Court will ap-
 "ply to the honourable the President and Council to appoint another
 "gentleman to fill up the vacancy.

I am, S. I R,

Calcutta,
 the 6th Oct. 1767.

Your most obedient humble servant,
 (Signed). JOHN HOLME, Reg."

On the 8th of *October* 1767 the writer sent a complimentary letter to the Mayor and Aldermen on the subject of their foregoing letter to the board, which, as Mr. *Verelst* has exhibited as a matter of criminality against him, is inserted, for the reader's perusal, in the

APPENDIX :



* APPENDIX : and on the next day he sent another letter to the President and Council, in answer to that which he had received from Mr. Secretary *Droz*, of the 1st *October* 1767. In this † letter he earnestly pressed the board for an answer upon the very important points on which he had addressed them in his former letters, relative to his property and that of others in his hands, in order that he might be enabled to determine upon his proceeding to *Europe* by the next ship.

With respect to the charge against him contained in the letter of the 1st *October* 1767, that he “*was carrying on an improper intercourse with the Dutch, to the prejudice of the Company’s affairs,*” notwithstanding the solemn call which he had made upon them, in his letter already cited, of the 9th *October* 1767, he could obtain no satisfaction from the President and Council. They would neither acquaint him with the nature of his crime, nor hear his defence. It was therefore impossible for him even to guess what this charge meant ; nor could he ever discover it in *India*.

It was Mr. *Verelst*’s publication that first disclosed this important secret to the writer, above five years after that very gentleman and his confederates had condemned and punished him for this unknown crime. But the charge is so truly malicious, frivolous, and groundless, that we should not intrude on the reader’s patience, by a recital of the circumstances attending it, if the President and Council of *Bengal*, and even the *East India* Directors, had not given importance to this insignificant transaction, by the great and fruitless pains they have taken in their investigation of it.

It appears from a paper in the Appendix to Mr. *Verelst*’s book, page 196, that the information against the writer, alluded to in the letter from the President and Council of the 1st *October* 1767, originally came from a *Dutch* gentleman, named *Daniel Lankheet*, and was transmitted in a private letter to Mr. *Verelst*, from Mr. *Thomas Kelsall*, then Chief of the *English* factory at *Dacca*. It is most probable that no attention was paid by the board to the writer’s call to be heard against this charge, for fear of the consequences of a public discussion, which would have brought to light another ‡ combination of

of

* Appendix, F. Num. XIV. page 446.

† See his letter to the board of the 9th *October* 1767. Ibid. page 447.

‡ As this business was carried on as secretly as possible, we cannot particularly specify the precise shares which those gentlemen respectively held. But Colonel *Smith* has acknowledged (see Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 939,) that the advances made on his account at the *Aurungs* amounted to 25,000 ruppes. In the province



of the gentlemen of Council, who had engaged together for the provision of cloths, or *piece-goods*, at the *Aurungs*. The charge, as contained in Mr. *Kellsall's* information of the 18th *September* 1767, imports, that the writer was engaged in a joint concern with Mr. *Vernet*, the Governor of the *Dutch* settlements in *Bengal*, for the provision of goods at *Dacca*, to the amount of 87,500*l.* to the great “prejudice of the Company’s business, and *trade in general*; since, “in order to get in so enormous an investment, the parties must “have necessarily *purchased at an advanced price* ;” and that upon the gentlemen of the *Dutch* factory’s *disdaining* to execute this commission, the business had been transferred, on account of “Messrs. *Vernet* and *Bolts*, to a less conscientious agent, an *Armenian*, named *Cogee Miguel Sarkis*.

Some time afterwards, Mr. *Verelst* procured an *affidavit* from Mr. *Kellsall*, relative to this pretended *clandestine trade* of the writer’s, which, with other * documents of equal importance, collected or framed against him after he was sent away from *Bengal*, were transmitted to the Court of *East India* Directors, by the *Shrewsbury*, and

vince of *Dacca*, where the main part of this joint investment was provided, under the management of Mr. *Kellsall*, the business was prosecuted with such rigour, that the words *committee-cloth*, meaning what was provided on this private account, were then more familiar to the weavers than those of the *Company's investment*. The oppressions committed under colour of making the *Company's investment* were carried to such a height in that province, that the country-merchants have been known to *bury their muslins under-ground*, for fear they should be seized by the *Company's* Peons. In support of this assertion, the writer is now in possession of an original narrative, in the hand-writing of one of the natives, sent him from *Dacca*, whereby it appears, that weavers and brokers have there been imprisoned, flogged, put in irons, fined large sums of money, and treated in the most ignominious manner, for only daring to sell a few pieces of cloth to such persons as would pay them best for it. See a translation of this narrative in the APPENDIX, A. Num. XXXIII. page 170.

* There was also another document of the same frivolous nature sent to the Directors against the writer by the *Shrewsbury*, attested on the 23d December 1768, under the hand and seal of *David Killican*, Esq; the Mayor of *Calcutta*. This was an account of an agreement made on the 6th *February* 1768, between *Charles Cazenove*, Esq; Chief of the *Danish* factory, and the writer; whereby, for a valuable consideration, the writer was to have the Chief’s privilege of sending the weight of 1200 *Danish* pounds, in goods, to *Copenhagen*, on their *Company's* ship the *Countess of Moltke*. The issue of this affair was, that from the distress in which the Governor and Council had involved his affairs, his Attornies, in his absence, could not furnish the goods to fill up the privilege; and there never was, at any time, a single piece of goods sent to *Europe* on the writer’s account, by virtue of this agreement, on any ship whatever.

A *Danish* gentleman, Mr. *Christian Frederick Brive*, who was Secretary to Mr. *Cazenove* and the Council at *Serampore*, was the person who furnished the information; and he appears to have been afterwards promoted, for his good services, to the office of an Attorney in the late Mayor’s Court at *Calcutta*.



received in *London* on the 5th *December* 1769. For the information of Mr. *Kelsall*, of the 18th *September* 1767; the letter on the same subject from the Court of Directors to the President and Council in *Bengal*, dated the 23d *March* 1770; and the answer from the President and Council, of the 2d *April* 1771, we must request the reader to turn to our * APPENDIX; while we proceed to give a short account of the real nature of this transaction, on which all parties appear to have been equally willing to mislead or be misled, so long as either could serve to injure the writer.

In the districts of *Silbetta* and *Dacca*, the writer had large concerns outstanding, as well in debts as unsold effects. Among the latter, a principal article was copper; which, before he resigned the service, he had bought at the Company's auction in *Calcutta*, and transported to those markets for sale. The returns from thence could only be made in the commodities produced in those countries. When this became the object, it was agreed, in the beginning of February 1768, between Governor *Vernet* and the writer, to purchase some cloth at *Dacca*, on their joint account, paying the duties to the Nabob of *Dacca*, as usual on such transactions. Herein one view of the writer's was natural to a merchant, to have his goods cheaper, by the charges of merchandize being divided on a large instead of a small invoice. The other alternative, of paying the duties, he cheerfully submitted to, that no objections might be urged against the legality of his trade, by his enemies, who had deprived him of the privilege of dustucks, even before the expiration of the customary twelve months allowed after resignation of the service. The sum in which Mr. *Vernet* engaged was only current rupees + 21,468; and the intended commission was given to Mr. *Daniel Lankheet*, who received it, at that time, as a great favour. Before the commencement of the business, Mr. *Lankheet* represented the great obstructions he should meet with from the dependants of the *English* factory at *Dacca*; and in consequence of his repeated representations on that subject, both Mr. *Vernet* and the writer relinquished all thoughts of the concern, as may be seen by the copy of a ‡ letter written to Mr. *Lankheet* on that occasion.

Upon

* Appendix, F. Num. XIII. page 445. Num. LIII. page 558. and Num. LVI. page 560.

† About 2,330/.

‡ " To Mr. *Daniel Lankheet*.

" DEAR SIR,

" I have been favoured with your's of the 25th *February*; and, in consequence of the difficulties represented by you, I have relinquished all thoughts of the concern, with a
" Mr.



Upon disputes happening between the *Dutch* gentlemen at *Dacca*, Mr. *Kelsall* and the gentlemen of the *English* factory, who frequently had Mr. *Lankheet* at their houses, got intelligence of this matter, which has been so misrepresented: and they as cheerfully made use of it, against the writer, from a jealousy of his interference with their own concerns, and in order to ingratiate themselves with Governor *Verelst*, as Mr. *Lankheet* afterwards did, ungratefully, to injure his benefactor, Governor *Vernet*.

It is true, that *Cogee Miguel Sarkis*, a considerable *Armenian* merchant, who, with his family, had been established for many years at *Dacca*, had transacted business for the writer before, as he did also after that period. But it is *false*, that this concern was transferred to Mr. *Sarkis* on account of Messrs. *Vernet* and *Bolts*; nor had the writer, as he solemnly declares, any commercial concern of a similar or any other nature, under the management of any other person or persons, jointly with Mr. *Vernet*, before or after the said month of *February* 1768: which however, if he had, would have been *perfectly lawful*.

Nor less *false* was the information, transmitted by Mr. *Kelsall* to Mr. *Verelst*, and by him to the Directors, concerning the immensity of this pretended engagement, 87,500*l.* for the whole of all the writer's concerns in Mr. *Sarkis*'s hands at no one period amounted to so many rupees.

Upon consideration, therefore, of the papers already referred to on this affair, the candid reader will perceive, that there was not the least foundation for this charge, as brought against the writer, by Mr. *Verelst*; that at worst it was only an intention to have carried on a lawful commercial-adventure with Mr. *Vernet*, which never took effect; that this intended trade was not agreed on till *February* 1768, and was laid aside in the following month; although Mr. *Verelst* has given the Public Mr. *Kelsall*'s information of the fact ON THE * 18TH SEPTEMBER 1767; and that even the *East India* Di-

" Mr. *Vernet* is now resolved to prosecute solely on the account of the *Dutch* Company.
 " He has repaid me here the money that was sent on the joint account: you will therefore of course receive the necessary orders from him.

" I am sorry for this disappointment, as, in consequence of what *you had proposed at*
 " *Chinsurah*, I had flattered myself we should have been able to do some business together. If there be any thing wherein I can serve you here, I request you will command
 " me, who am,

DEAR SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) WILLIAM BOLTS."

Calcutta,
 the 3th March 1768.

* *Verelst's* Appendix, page 196.

rectors,



rectors, * *in the year 1770*, were seriously amusing themselves in dressing up this affair, to be used in a Court of Record, in justification of what the writer had suffered *in the year 1768*.

Equally malicious and groundless was every other charge brought against the writer, by President *Vereist* and the Council at *Bengal*: notwithstanding which they were all with equal eagerness received, countenanced, and adopted by the Directors of the Company. But perhaps the reader will wonder why the sentence pronounced against him by the Secret Committee, on the 18th *April 1767*, has hitherto remained unrefuted.

This sentence was wholly founded on the assistance the writer had given to one native named *Gocul Sonar*, and to another named *Rammaut*, the merchant already mentioned in this work, in order to their obtaining justice against *Nobekissen*, the political banyan to the President and Select Committee. It will be seen from the papers in the Appendix, that the writer had most earnestly sought for an opportunity of justifying himself against those proceedings of the Committee; but it was in vain to attempt a vindication before men who had laughed to scorn the constitutional rights of their fellow-subjects, and who seemed to hold in contempt every idea of justice. He therefore resolved, on that occasion, to address himself in a direct channel, by memorial, to the Court of *East India* Directors.

The said sentence being also pronounced against him after the sailing of the *Mercury*, the last ship of that season, whose final dispatches were dated in *April 1767*, the writer of course had no opportunity of appealing to the Directors before the dispatch of the ships of the next season. Besides, as the President and Council had, about that time, violently threatened to send him a prisoner to *England*, he did not know but he might himself have been embarked with his own memorial. But when he perceived they were not ready for that farther act of violence and breach of the charter, he thought it most prudent to let the first dispatches be sent away before he delivered in his vindication, in order that the secret proceedings of the Select Committee might be transmitted to the Directors, signed by the President and other members. This precaution he deemed extremely necessary, for fear of the dark works of the Committee; who, there was reason to suspect, would have had few scruples of conscience, even to the altering of the records made of their former secret proceedings, for answering any temporary purpose, on seeing his defence.

* See Appendix, Letter F. Num. LIII. page 558. and Num. LVI. page 560.



The writer's memorial of the 12th *October* 1767 will not only serve to exhibit what he had to say in his justification, against the secret accusation of the Select Committee, but likewise to shew, that the Court of Directors were so long ago informed of all the evils then existing in their government in *Bengal*, and which naturally brought on the ruinous consequences which they afterwards experienced : we therefore submit it entire to the reader's perusal in the * APPENDIX.

As this memorial particularly arraigned the conduct of Governor *Verehl*?, his Committee and Council, it was but just they should have an opportunity given of vindicating themselves. It was, moreover, the rule of the Company's service, that all addresses to the Courts of *East India* Directors should be transmitted through the channel of the Presidents and Councils of their respective settlements. The writer, therefore, inclosed it in a letter to the board, by which he equally conformed to the established usage of the service, and gave his late fellow-servants, what they had on all occasions industriously withheld from him, an opportunity of being heard before condemnation. In that letter, which was dated the † 18th *October* 1767, he likewise offered to prove the assertions contained in his memorial.

There were two members at that time, Messrs. *Richard Becher* and *James Alexander*, who, having but lately taken their seats at the board, had not been concerned in the transactions against the writer of *April* 1767. He flattered himself, therefore, that in those gentlemen he might meet with minds untainted and unprejudiced, or at least that would in some degree be attentive to the calls of justice on behalf of an oppressed man. On this presumption he wrote a ‡ letter also to those gentlemen, principally with a view of setting them on their guard against the artifices which he knew would be exerted against him.

But, though this letter was of a private nature, Messrs. *Becher* and *Alexander* did not condescend to answer it. The Residency at the *Durbar* and the Chiefship of *Patna*, objects in their view, might appear of much greater consequence to them than the doing of justice to an individual, against the President and his colleagues. They therefore delivered the writer's letter to Mr. *Verehl*?, and he laid it before the board ; who now all joined in expressing the keenest re-

* See Appendix, F. Num. XVII. pages 450 to 473.

† Ibid. Num. XVIII. page 473.

‡ Ibid. Num. XIX. page 474.



sentiment towards him, in revenge for his having exposed their misconduct, in his memorial to the Directors.

The proceedings of the President and Council, held on the * 5th November 1767, on occasion of the writer's said memorial, and the letters just referred to, are worthy of the reader's perusal for their curiosity, as well as necessary for his understanding of what follows. The extreme bombast of style, and the gross compliments therein paid to the President, by himself and the rest of the board, carry with them a sufficient comment on their own merits. The writer was ready, and offered to prove every assertion contained in his memorial whereof the truth should be contested; so that, rather than give their own opinions on their own conduct to the Directors it would have been more honourable for the President and Council to have undertaken to prove the falsity of his charges against them; in which endeavour, armed with the power they possessed, and themselves being the Judges in *Bengal*, they had nothing but truth to fear. Yet they thought it more prudent and safe to assert, in general terms, "that the *absurdity* and *malice* of the memorial was too evident to require any strictures;" and therefore they forwarded it to the Directors, "a number in the packet, WITHOUT REMARKS." But no *private minutes* of the President and Council could *publicly disprove facts*; much less could they convince the "*whole settlement*," that it was upright to obstruct the avenues to justice; or, in a *British* colony, to transfer the complaints of *Indian* merchants from an open trial by juries, to the clandestine proceedings of a *junto*, sworn to secrecy among themselves; and who, as time hath since shewn, were deeply interested in the event of their complaints.

But for the present we postpone our farther exposure of the conduct of the President and members of the Committees and Council, relative to the *Hindoos*, *Ramnaut* and *Gocul*; in order to continue our narrative.

At the expiration of a fortnight, from the proceedings of the 5th November 1767, the following letter was sent to the writer:

“ To Mr. William Belts.

“ S I R,

“ I am directed by the honourable the President and Council to acquaint you, that they have perused your address to the Court of

* See Appendix, F. Num. XX. page 475.



“ Directors, your letter to them, also your letter to the Mayor’s
 “ Court regarding the President, and to Messrs. *Becher* and *Alex-*
 “ *ander* ; all of which confirm them in their opinion, that it is
 “ highly *necessary to prevent your remaining in the country.*

“ I am therefore once more to repeat their orders to you to return
 “ to *Europe* on the first ship that sails from hence ; which you must
 “ not on any account evade, as they are determined that *you shall not.*
 “ *remain in India.*

I am, S I R,

Your most obedient servant,

Fort William,
Nov. 5, 1767.

(Signed) SIMEON DROZ; Sec.”

Among the methods contrived to distress and harass the devoted victim, in which all the members of the board, and every tool over whom they had any influence, were industriously engaged ; the grand plot formed against him at this period was, to effect the removal or banishment of his commercial agents from the territories of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* and the Rajah *Bulwantsing* ; where they had charge of the conclusion of his concerns, and the collection of his outstanding debts. This design was particularly levelled against certain *Armenian* merchants, who, unfortunately for them, did the writer the favour to act for him in that business.

The gentlemen who were engaged in the various monopolies that have already been mentioned had a particular interest in effecting the banishment of those *Armenians* ; which was, that of getting immediate possession of their trade, and of removing all checks or obstructions to their own. In the prosecution, therefore, of these interested views against the writer and his *Armenian* agents, such artifices were used, by the President and the members of the Council, as none but the most mean and abject minds could ever have stooped to.

It is by all honest men acknowledged, that the powers of every government were originally delegated for the good of the governed, and that they can continue no longer binding than while exercised to that end. When, therefore, men invested with supreme power, but much more the sub-delegates of a subject-government, so far dishonour themselves as to employ it in the practice of tyranny, oppression, and injustice, they thereby forfeit all title to respect in their stations, render themselves just objects of contempt, and make it necessary, as well as laudable, by every legal means, to resist their acts of violence, and even bring them to justice.

Upon



Upon these principles, the writer could no longer refrain from treating his late fellow-servants, the President and Council, with that contempt which they had now deservedly brought upon themselves; as will appear by the letter which he wrote, on the * 21st of *November* 1767, in answer to the last which he had received from Mr. Secretary *Droz*. He therein told the Secretary, that he should take no notice of any future letters respecting his proceeding to *Europe*, unless he received an answer to what he had represented relative to the security of his property, and unless such letters were signed by the whole board.

The writer indeed thought, that the seizing and transporting to *Europe* of a merchant who was possessed of great property, as well his own as belonging to absent persons, then in *Europe*; who had large accounts and dependencies with the natives; and who was resident within the *British* settlement of *Calcutta*, as one of his Majesty's Judges, by virtue of the royal charter, were measures of such consequence as merited something more than a simple letter from Mr. Secretary *Droz* to authorize; at least a formal avowal thereof, under the hands of the President and Council: who had refused to take the least notice of his repeated representations relative to the collecting and remitting of that considerable property to *Europe*.

However, the letter to Mr. *Droz* last referred to, which was never answered, put an end to the correspondence between the President and Council and the writer, till about four months afterwards, when their actual seizure and imprisonment of his agents in the country, by military force, made it necessary for him to renew it.

The persons who, under Colonel *Richard Smith* and Governor *Verelst*, acted principal parts in effecting the imprisonment of the writer's agents, were Mr. *Robert Muddifon*, Mr. *Verelst's* *Persian* translator; Mr. *John Chamier*, who, after Lord *Clive's* departure, was continued at *Banâras* as Mr. *Verelst's* agent for diamonds; and Captain *Gabriel Harper*, Colonel *Smith's* Aid de Camp and † partner in trade, who, we have already observed, was stationed at *Fyzabad*.

For the accomplishment of their purpose, applications had been made, by President *Verelst* and Colonel *Smith*, to the Nabob *Sujah al Daulah*, so early as *June* or ‡ *July* 1767. But the first document relative to this business, which hath come to public light, is an *extract*

* See Appendix, F. Num. XXI. page 479.

† See General *Smith's* evidence in the House of Commons, Journals, vol. XXXIII. page 941.

‡ Appendix, E. Num. III. page 348.



of a letter from Mr. *Robert Maddison* to Mr. *Vereist*, dated *Patna*, the * 23d *October* 1767. On perusal of this paper the reader will find, that the President was informed of a fleet of boats belonging to the writer, loaded with *saltpetre*, *opium*, &c. arriving at *Patna*; where, it was said, they were endeavoured to be passed under Mr. *Maddison's* name, who gave this information to the President, *because the writer's time for enjoying the privilege of a dustuck was expired*.—Without expatiating on the zeal or immense consequence of Mr. *Vereist's* *Persian* translator, whose name alone could pass a fleet of thirty boats, the reader will please to remark, that the assertion, on the 23d of *October* 1767, that the writer's “time of a dustuck was expired,” was † not true, as Mr. President *Vereist* knew full well, although, as hath been observed, he was nevertheless ‡ unjustly deprived of that privilege.

From the letter to Monsieur *Gentil*, already referred || to, the reader will have conceived that gentleman had been of some service in the writer's transactions at the Court of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*. In fact, he had afforded considerable assistance to the *Armenian* merchants, as well in the writer's business as in their own. It was therefore thought necessary, if possible, to effect the removal of that gentleman also. At a former period, as we have observed in another place, he had been strongly recommended to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, by § General *Carnac*. But, although the Company could not have less to fear from any individual on earth, he was now represented to be of the most formidable consequence; as if the safety of Colonel *Smith's* whole brigade, or the very existence of the Company, depended on the hasty removal of one inoffensive *Frenchman* from the Court of their ** peaceful ally at *Fyzabad*.

In pursuit of their plan, therefore, the Colonel's first letter against this *French* gentleman was written to the Select Committee at *Calcutta*, from *Illahabad*, on the 23d *October* 1767. In the same letter he also desired, that Mr. *Maddison*, who was then at *Patna*, might be sent up to him; which, on the 17th *November* 1767, was accordingly

* Appendix, E. Num. IV. page 348.

† As the writer was permitted to resign the Company's service on the 26th *November* 1766, the usual twelve months did not expire till the 26th *November* 1767.

‡ See the letters to and from Mr. *Thomas Rumbold*, APPENDIX, Letter E. pages 349 and 350.

|| Appendix, page 347.

§ Ibid. page 288.

** See the 4th paragraph of Mr. *Vereist's* letter of 5th *April* 1769, Appendix, A. Num. XL. page 195.



ordered by the Committee, who now as readily coincided with the Colonel's sentiments regarding Mons. * *Gentil*.

The next document which Mr. *Verelst* has furnished, is another *extraît* of a letter from Mr. *Maddison*, after he had joined Colonel *Smith*, dated *Illahabad*, † the 26th November 1767; in which he particularly informs the Governor, that he had got possession of a letter from the writer to Mons. *Gentil*, meaning that of the 19th June 1767, ‡ already produced, which he had delivered to Colonel *Smith*. Not only this correspondence with Mons. *Gentil*, but even that between the writer and his mercantile-agents, was therein represented as *a dangerous channel of conveying intelligence* to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*. The *Armenians* were accused of “filling the country with lying rumours, and of seeming to have adopted a system of fixing themselves in the Nabob's dominions, as they were formerly at *Murshedabad*.” The manner in which Mr. *Maddison* conceived the writer passed his boats *loaded with saltpetre* and other goods, was likewise described, and all these important circumstances were recommended to the attention of Mr. President *Verelst*, who had himself before desired Mr. *Maddison* to procure a particular letter, written by Mr. *Bolts*.

The whole of Mr. *Maddison*'s accusatory informations to the President evidently proceeded from the settled plan, for obstructing and undermining the writer's business; on which view, they were of course gladly received and proceeded on by the board. There was not, however, a circumstance in the whole which had even the shadow of truth for its foundation, except a report, which might possibly have circulated, concerning those *Armenian* merchants engaging to transact business for Mr. *Rumbold*, as that gentleman had actually written § letters to *Cogee Melcomb* and *Cogee Gregore* for that purpose, a few days before the storm was raised against them. How far Mr. *Maddison*'s informations proceeded from his zeal for the Company's service, the reader may be enabled to judge from a very curious letter which, at a subsequent period, he wrote to his partner in trade at *Patna*, and which not only stands proved on the records of the late Mayor's Court of *Calcutta*, but has also been || exhibited before the Court of *East India* Directors.

* Appendix E. Num. V. page 349.

† Ibid. E. Num. VI. page 349.

‡ Ibid. E. Num. II. page 347.

§ It is probable Mr. *Rumbold* had forgot this circumstance when he gave his evidence, the House of Commons. See Journals, vol. XXXIII. page 910, at the bottom.

|| Appendix A. Num. XXXIX. page 193.



Still on the same subject of the writer's *treasonable* correspondence with Mons. *Gentil*, the next accusation was made in a pompous letter from Colonel *Smith*, dated *Illahabad*, the 24th *November* 1767, to the *Select Committee*; which was laid before the President and Council at their consultation of the 10th *December* 1767. From the Colonel's letter it appears, that the offensive part of what the writer had informed Mons. *Gentil*, was a report, that his late partner in trade, Mr. *John Johnstone*, was coming out Governor on the part of the King. The Colonel thought that this was a "falsehood which tended to lessen the essential dignity and necessary influence of the President; to whom he conceived it was so great an insult, obliquely offered, that if he, the Colonel, had been present at the board, he would have moved for the exertion of their authority to the utmost, to free the settlement from so dangerous an inhabitant as Mr. Bolts."

It is worthy of remark, with what eagerness all measures were pursued that had a tendency to injure the writer. The President and Council, by their records of the * *tenth* *December* 1767, refer for their information to a *Select Committee* which was not held till the *eleventh*. But the most ridiculous part of the extract from Colonel *Smith's* letter, as it stands on the said proceedings of the *Select Committee* of the 11th *December* 1767, is omitted on the consultations just referred to. His words were as follow :

"The nature of the intelligence transmitted from *Calcutta*, by
 " *Sujab Dowlah's* Vakeel, is without limits. The Nabob is almost
 " as fully acquainted with the parliamentary proceedings concern-
 " ing the Company's affairs, AS I AM. How far the importance
 " and dignity of the Company, and the weight and influence of
 " the administration, is lessened in his esteem by this communica-
 " tion, may be easily conceived. Whilst a Vakeel is so ready,
 " and so sure a channel to communicate intelligence, few men will
 " be found so hardy as to maintain a direct correspondence with
 " the Nabob, &c. &c."

It may not be easily conceived, by an *English* reader, why the Nabob of *Owd*, an ally of the *British* nation, in times of profound peace, might not be as safely trusted with the secret of the proceedings of a *British* parliament, as Colonel *Smith*. But if the writer of such a letter as that already quoted to Mons. *Gentil*, had so much to dread from the resentment of so zealous a gentleman; in

* Appendix E. Num. VII. page 351.



a similar case, within the sphere of the Colonel's transcendent power, what might not his Majesty's servants apprehend, who have been lately sending over to the natives of *India*, translations into the *Persian* language of a *British* act of parliament? It is equally inconceivable, how "the importance and dignity of the Company, or "the weight and influence of *the administration*," could be lessened, in the esteem of the Nabob, or even of the lowest among the natives, had such a report been true, at that time, either with respect to a Governor or a Commander in Chief.

However, on such secret, interested, and frivolous informations, without accusing the writer or his agents of any real misconduct, without hearing them in their defence, without any just cause of complaint against them, and contrary to the inclinations * of the Princes in whose dominions they resided, were those innocent merchants to be suddenly seized, and banished six hundred miles from their habitations, families, and property.

Mr. President *Verelst*'s † minute, at the consultation of the 10th December 1767, upon these informations received from Mr. *Maddison* and Colonel *Smith*, was the first that he had made on this subject; and was calculated to obtain the sanction of the board for the arbitrary orders, or *recommendations*, which he had some months before privately, and unauthorizedly, sent to the Nabob *Sujah al-Dowlah*. The acquisition of the writer's private letter to *Monf. Gentil* was Mr. *Verelst*'s master-piece in politics; and from such informations he acquainted the board, "that he could assert, from "undoubted authority, that Mr. *Bolts* continued his correspondence "with persons residing at the Courts of *the country-princes*; and, "with his *Armenian* agents, endeavouring, by false reports and representations, to lessen the respect due to *the administration*, and "to destroy the harmony and confidence subsisting with the "powers of *Hindustan*; that he had an *Armenian* agent at *Fyzabad*, "named *Cogee Rafael*, another at *Banaras*, *Cogee Melcomb*, and a "third near *Ghazipoor*, named *Cogee Gregore*, through whom he "ungratefully endeavoured to injure the interests of those in whose service he had raised an independency;" that, therefore, he had desired the Nabob to banish all such from his country; and as he was informed that Mr. *Bolts* had passed his goods, duty-free, under old

* Appendix E. Num. XII. page 356. Num. XIV. page 359. Num. XXI. page 365, and Num. LVII. page 392.

† Ibid. page 352.



dustucks, he, the President, had “ wrote to the ministers, desiring
 “ them to issue orders for stopping all dustucks of a very old date ;
 “ a measure which he hoped would put a stop to so DISHONEST
 “ AND UNLAWFUL A PROCEEDING.”

Nor less ridiculous were the sentiments expressed by the President and Council, in their letters to the Directors on these subjects ; for proof of which we beg leave to refer to their general * letter by the ship *Norfolk*, dated *Calcutta*, the 10th *December* 1767. This letter recapitulated all their charges against the writer ; that he had offered an insult to their government, in the person of the President ; daringly attempted to lessen their influence in the country, and to destroy the harmony which happily subsisted in Council, by personal addresses to the board, and secret correspondencies, carried on by means of *Armenian* agents ; and that although he was an Alderman of the Mayor’s Court, they were determined to seize him by force, and send him a prisoner to *England*.——That the expediency of fulfilling this resolution became more evident from the intelligence which they had since received, of the information he had given *Monf. Gentil*, relative to the affairs of the Company, and of his “ ASSOCIATE,” Mr. *Johnstone*’s being appointed Governor, on the part of his Majesty ; that the danger of such proceedings was too apparent, “ and must justify whatever method they
 “ proposed to rid the country of such a man.”

After enumerating such supposed *capital* crimes, and enlarging on their own dangers and apprehensions, they thus conclude :

Par. 79. “ Having now represented fully to you the conduct of
 “ Mr. *Bolts*, we beg leave again to point out to you the necessity
 “ of having the extent of our authority indisputably fixed, with
 “ regard to sending persons home by force, who will not comply with
 “ our orders. For if this power is not granted, and persons are
 “ allowed to remain here, and set our government at defiance with
 “ impunity ; anarchy and confusion must infallibly take place, and
 “ your influence in these parts, in the end, be totally subverted.”

Such were the proceedings and representations of the Governor and Council. The Secret Committee having also readily coincided with the sentiments and measures of Colonel *Smith*, he was requested, in a letter of the † 22d *December* 1767, signed by President *Verelst*, Messrs. *Cartier*, *Becher* and *Efloyer* ; “ to use his en-

* Appendix F. page 481.

† Ibid. E. Num. VIII. page 353.



“deavours with the Nabob to remove Mr. *Bolts's* gomastahs from his dominions.”

The Colonel's zeal had indeed * already been exerted, and required no instigation from the Secret Committee, to effect a purpose which he had so much at heart for the gratification and interest of himself and his friends. And in the month of *December* 1767, he paid a visit to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, at *Fyzabad*, whereof, one principal object was the removal of those *Armenians*, who were the writer's agents, from the dominions of the Nabob.

So early as † *March* 1767, the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* had been made independent, as was pretended, with respect to all restrictions of trade carried on by gomastahs within his own dominions, by letters from Mr. President *Verelst*; who, before that period, had also informed him, that the writer, having resigned the Company's service, was not under their ‡ protection, nor deserving of the favour shewn him by that Prince; who, as hath just been seen, by an order from the Select Committee of the 22d *December* 1767 to Colonel *Smith*, was also required “to remove Mr. *Bolts's* gomastahs from his dominions.”

Under such circumstances, the reader who has any right information of *India* will acknowledge, that the writer could possess no influence with the *Indian* Princes for the protection of his agents or gomastahs, except such as was founded on general justice, or their personal good-will towards him; much less could those Princes have been afraid to exert their own authority against his *Armenian* or other agents, if their misconduct had rendered such an exertion needful.

There were no *Armenians*, at that time, “in the service of individuals,” residing under *British* protection, as agents, in all the provinces of *Illahabad* and *Owd*, except those employed by the writer; although there were many other *Armenian* merchants in those provinces, as well as in every other part of *Hindustan*. *Mirzapore*, *Banâras*, and *Ghazipoor*, were places at a great distance from the Court of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, and within the jurisdiction of the Zemindary of the *Rajah* Bulwantsing, whose revenues, annually payable to that Nabob, were fixed at a stipulated sum, by treaty, guaranteed by the Company. The *Rajah*, therefore, exer-

* Appendix E. Num. III. page 348.

† Ibid. Num. XIII. page 358.

‡ Mr. *Verelst's* letters on this subject stand on the Company's records, dated the 28th April 1767.



cised as Zemindar and Prince of the country, every authority relative to the trade, revenues, and government of his own Zemindary, independantly of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*; although, as has been already shewn, that Nabob, in consequence of a *perwānah* from President *Verelst*, had been induced to give Colonel *Smith* and *Claud Russell*, Esq; an exclusive grant in the name of their gomastah *Ismaelbeg*, for carrying on the saltpetre-trade in his dominions.

It was necessary to bring these facts to the reader's view, before we produced to him the next document that has come to public knowledge, which was a letter from Colonel *Smith* to the Select Committee, dated the * 3d January 1768. In that letter, which appears to have been calculated to effect the removal of all obstacles arising from other merchants, the Colonel informed the Committee, “ that the
 “ Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* had represented to him the great in-
 “ conveniencies which arose from gomastahs and *dependents* of
 “ *English* gentlemen residing in his dominions, particularly at *Mir-*
 “ *zapore*, *Bandras*, and *Ghazipoor*; that the Nabob was extremely
 “ cautious in exerting his authority over any of those who even
 “ assumed the *English* name, notwithstanding the impositions, ex-
 “ tortions, and frauds they were guilty of; that as the Nabob had
 “ received repeated assurances from the Presidency, that no private trade
 “ should be carried on in his dominions, so he requested, that the
 “ Colonel would exert his power to free the country from the Ar-
 “ menians and natives of *Bengal*, in the service of individuals; for
 “ whose expulsion the Colonel assured the Nabob effectual means
 “ should be used, as he had heard the “ President made it a point
 “ neither to grant *dustucks* or *perwānahs* into his Excellency's dominions.”
 Further, as a proof of disinterestedness, “ the Colonel assured the
 “ Nabob, it should be his care, that the *perwānah* which he himself
 “ had granted to *Ismaelbeg* (one of his own subjects) for the exclusive
 “ privilege of making saltpetre ON ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH GENTLE-
 “ MEN, should be returned.”

The whole of this letter was a compleat misrepresentation of facts, and to persons acquainted with the geography and government of those countries, carries with it its own refutation. The Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* could not possibly have any reason to complain of what was done in matters of trade at *Mirzapore*, *Banaras*, and *Ghazipoor*. That Nabob also, when applied to by Colonel *Smith* for the expulsion of the *Armenians* “ in the service of individuals,”



was so averse to such an act of injustice, that he * espoused their cause, and afterwards took into his own † service Mr. *Johannes Padre Rafael*, the only *Armenian*, under the Colonel's description, then resident within his immediate jurisdiction, in order to protect him from violence.—The Colonel was equally unlucky in his application in ‡ *January* 1768 to the Rajah *Bulwantsing*, at *Baniras*; who actually declared, in the Colonel's presence, *that he had no complaints to make against Mr. Gregore Cojamaul*, the *Armenian* merchant whom he was directed to remove. But what proved still more disgraceful to the Colonel's arguments was, that the only real complaint of this nature, appearing on the Company's records, was actually made against the Colonel's own gomastah, *Ismaelbeg*, by the KING, or Grand Mogul, *SHAH ALLUM*; who, in *February* 1768, wrote a § letter to Mr. *Verelst*, complaining, that “one *Ismaelbeg* had engaged the whole trade of *saltpetre*, under the sanction of the English, and desiring to be informed on what authority he really acted.”

As the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, and the Rajah *Bulwantsing*, had till then evaded the many applications made to them for seizing and banishing the writer's agents, the order was at last pretended to be made || general for recalling all gomastahs from those countries. It had been falsely alleged, that the carrying on of any trade in those dominions had been in violation of the ¶ orders of the Directors; for they entirely disapproved of the restrictions that had been laid thereon, pronouncing them to be “unadvised, unnecessary, ** *impolitic*, and *pernicious*.” However, when every other artifice had failed, Mr. *Verelst* at last requested the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* to oblige him, by speedily apprehending *Johannes Padre Rafael* and *Muscan Estephan*, *Armenian* merchants, then resident at *Fyzabad*, and sending them to *Calcutta*, as being †† “a tribe of a bad cast, whose principles were only falsehood.” But the Nabob appearing to continue tardy in such ‡‡ service, the Company's seapoys, under Colo-

* Appendix E. Num. XIV. page 359.

† See Colonel *Smith's* letter to Mr. *Verelst*, Ibid. Num. XXI. page 365.

‡ Ibid. Num. XII. page 357.

§ Ibid. Num. XVII. page 362.

|| Ibid. Num. XXXIX. page 380.

¶ Ibid. Num. XIX. page 364.

** Ibid. Num. XCIII. page 424.

†† Ibid. Num. XX. page 365.

‡‡ Ibid. Num. XXIV. page 367.



nel Smith's Aid de Camp and partner in trade, were employed for that purpose, while positive * orders were sent by the Governor to the Rajah *Bakeraufing*, for the imprisonment and banishment of the *Armenians*, *Melcomb Philip* and *Gregore Cojamaul*, who resided within his jurisdiction.

While measures were taking for seizing the person of Mr. *Rafael* he got intelligence thereof, and by letter from *Fyzabad*, informed the writer, that the reason assigned for his intended imprisonment was, his being an impostor, who falsely pretended to act for persons under *English* protection, without authority for so doing; and he therefore requested, under the writer's hand and seal, specific powers concerning the transactions he was entrusted with for his account, to be produced whenever necessary. In compliance with this requisition, the writer did, in *April* 1768, send him up, in the *Persian* language, powers duly authenticated for collecting his outstanding debts and balances, according to justice and equity; with declaring, that whoever impeded him therein, or should molest or imprison him, would be made responsible to the writer for all consequences. There is inserted in the APPENDIX a † translation of this paper, which certainly would have appeared unworthy of the reader's attention, had not this simple transaction been instanced by Mr. *Verelst* as a high crime, and the paper dignified with the title of “a ‡ proclamation issued in the style of a Sovereign;” or if the tool of a Mock-Nabob at *Murshedabad*, to whom the paper was afterwards shewn, had not, for serving an iniquitous purpose, been made, four months afterwards, to send it down to the § Presidency with complaints of it, as an insult on his dignity; and if the President and Council, contrary to truth and the evidence of the very paper before them, had not thereon complained of it to the || Directors in *September* 1768, as a letter written in an imperious style to *Mahommed Reza Khawn*.

During the above-related proceedings, Mr. *Verelst* having been informed that the writer had obtained from *Fyzabad*, copies of the letters which he had written for the seizure and banishment of the *Ar-*

* Appendix E. Num. XVI. page 361. Num. XXV. page 368. and Num. XXVII. page 369.

† Ibid. Num. XXXVIII. page 379.

‡ *Verelst's* View, &c. page 41.

§ Ibid. Appendix, page 208. It was laid before the board by President *Verelst* at consultation the 15th *August* 1768.

|| See the 103d paragraph of their letter. Appendix F. page 527.



menians, on the * 27th of *March* 1768, he sent complaints thercon to *Sujah al Dowlah*, desiring that Nabob to “make strict inquiry” into the affair, as a matter of the most serious moment;” alleging, that “if a man of so little consequence as Mr. *Bolts* could “thus penetrate into the *secrets* of his correspondence, it would be “much more easy for men of superior influence and importance “to do the same.” And after obtaining abundance of intelligence concerning the intrigues that were then carrying on to effect the ruin of those innocent men, the writer at last received positive information of their being actually imprisoned; and on the 30th *March* 1768 wrote a letter to the President, on the subject of such imprisonments.

In that † letter Mr. *Verelst* was fully informed of the nature of the writer’s concerns under the management of his *Armenian* agents, and of the losses that would accrue to him and them in consequence of their imprisonment. He requested, if they had been guilty of misbehaviour, that he might have time to appoint others to the care of his affairs, or that they might be released if innocent; and as they had not charge of any new concerns, that they might be permitted to continue there for four months, to conclude his old ones, on the same footing as the agents of the President himself, the rest of the Council, and of other gentlemen; while he offered to engage in any bond, as a security for their good-behaviour.—In order to put an end to the vexatious contests which subsisted among the gentlemen competitors for the saltpetre-trade, the writer likewise offered to put it on such a footing as that the Company might gain thereby at least fifteen thousand pounds sterling *per annum*, clear profit, besides other important advantages.

Without paying any attention to those parts of the writer’s letter, Mr. *Verelst* informed him, that repeated complaints had been received against gomastahs in general, in the provinces of *Ouzd* and *Illahabad*; and that the Company had given orders “for the positive “prohibition, to their servants, of all trade whatever in those provinces.” He however mentioned no particular complaints he had received of the writer’s agents; but, on the contrary, assured him, in his said letter of the ‡ 31st *March* 1768, THAT HE KNEW OF NO ORDERS FOR IMPEDING THE BUSINESS OF HIS GOMAST-

* Appendix E. Num. XXX. page 371.

† Ibid. Num. XXXII. page 372.

‡ Ibid. Num. XXXIII. page 375.



TAHS IN PARTICULAR, IN THE DOMINIONS OF SUJAH AL DOWLAH AND BULWANTSING.

The writer * informed Governor *Verelst*, in answer to his letter, that by copies of the orders which he had received, it appeared, that his gomastahs were particularly mentioned by name. But in order to give him an easy retreat, the writer attributed the President's ignorance of the orders, to his having been deceived by those who penned the *Persian* letters; and still requested the favour of orders for the releasement of the prisoners. The compliance with this request was far from the intention of Mr. *Verelst*, who, after repeated applications, informed the writer, by another letter, dated the 9th April 1768, that the orders given for recalling the gomastahs were general not particular; "but that as the names of such persons (the writer's agents) came to his knowledge, it became necessary to point them out."

After making a number of fruitless applications, the writer was at last referred to the Select Committee, who joined in solemnly assuring him, † THAT THEY, OR THE PRESIDENT, KNEW OF NO ORDERS FOR THE CONFINEMENT OF ANY OF HIS GOMASTAHS; and further informed him, that they thought he had no right to call upon them on this occasion, having long since had the usual time allowed him for the adjustment of all his affairs; and that as he had already been ordered to leave the country, and advised that *no further protection* would be given him, they were therefore determined *not to interfere*, or in any shape charge themselves with any of his concerns.

Several other applications were respectively made to the Select Committee and President and Council, on behalf of the imprisoned *Armenians*, as well by their own § relations, as by the writer, but without any effect. In the mean while, an innocent minister of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah's*, whom Mr. *Verelst* was pleased to suspect of having furnished the writer with copies of his orders for imprisoning those *Armenians*, to appease the President's wrath, was forced to send down a penal obligation called a || *Mutchulcab*, under his hand and seal, whereby, according to the arbitrary customs of the East, he and his family would have been devoted to destruc-

* Appendix E. Num. XXXIV. page 376.

† Ibid. Num. XXXVII. page 379.

‡ Ibid. Num. L. page 387.

§ Ibid. Num. LXIX. page 402. and Num. LXXVIII. page 408.

|| Ibid. Num. LXVIII. page 401.



tion, agreeably to the tenor of the *Mutchulcab*, if it had been proved that he had furnished the writer with copies of any of Mr. *Verelst*'s letters to the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*; who himself was likewise forced to *return* all * those which he had received on the same subject from the President.

On suspicion that the same kind of intelligence had been likewise given to the writer by the Rajah *Bakwanjing*, that Prince's Vakeel, or ambassador, was also ignominiously turned out of *Calcutta* by the † President, without any authority from, or even communication with his Council upon the subject. Of this the writer duly ‡ informed the board, and even offered to prove the fact; but although a less affront than this, the disgracefully turning out a *hircarah*, or spy, had greatly contributed to raise that indignation of *Serajah al Dowlah*, which terminated in the loss of *Calcutta*, the board took no notice of the writer's information.

Not being able to get any kind of satisfaction from the President and Council, or Select Committee, on the 18th *May* 1768, the writer caused a protest to be served on them, when assembled in Council, by the notary public; in which he declared his demand against them for damages, consequent of their imprisonment of his agents. At the same § consultation that most extraordinary edict was resolved on, which hath been also noticed in the first part of *Considerations*, &c. prohibiting all ARMENIANS, *Portugueze*, or their *descendants*, from residing or carrying on any trade, directly or indirectly, “*in any part of India, OUT OF THE PROVINCES OF BENGAL, BAHAR, AND ORISSA,*” under penalty of the severest *punishments*, and *confiscation* of their property.

It is recommended to the reader attentively to peruse the proceedings of the board at the consultation here referred to; and that he will afterwards advert to the following observations.—That this was *the first prohibition* that had been made of trade within the territories of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, which, by the eighth article of the treaty with that Nabob, it had been stipulated, that || *his Highness should allow the English Company to carry on, duty-free, through-*

* Appendix E. Num. LXXIX. page 410.

† Ibid. Num. LXXVII. page 408. Num. LXXXIV. page 415. and Num. LXXXVI. page 417.

‡ Ibid. page 415.

§ Ibid. Num. LXX. page 404.

|| Dated the 16th *Aug* 1765. See Reports of the House of Commons, 1773. vol. III. page 446.



out the whole of his dominions ; that this, and the other articles of the treaty, which had never been * renounced, were confirmed by Mr. Cartier, General Smith, and Mr. Claud Russell, in the fullest latitude, by a † subsequent treaty ; that the extraordinary regulation in question was originally made by the Select Committee on the 27th April 1768, in private ; that at the aforesaid consultation of the 18th May 1768, it was first ordered, that public notice should be given of this resolution, which, however, was not done before the 8th or 9th of June following, although it was to take place after the expiration of two months from the 27th April 1768 ; that if the President and Council had possessed a power to issue such an order, it would have been impossible for any person to comply with the conditions of it, who had outstanding concerns at the distance of six hundred miles from the Presidency of Calcutta ; and that the agents of such persons would be exposed to the SEVEREST PUNISHMENTS, and their property to CONFISCATION, even before news of the regulation could reach them.—When the candid reader has considered these facts, he will certainly allow, that we cannot too much admire the zeal, virtues, and abilities of our Calcutta legislators on this occasion.

But the writer's *Armenian* agents being brought away from the high countries, secured under confinement at *Murshedabad*, and by this edict precluded from returning thither when they might chance to be released ; the board were also pleased, at the same consultation, to consider “ the great disadvantages resulting from an immediate recall of *all gomastahs* of individuals, trading in the countries of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, and of the Rajah *Bulwant-sing* ; and thereupon resolved to allow them to reside there for the space of two months, for the adjustment of the affairs of their constituents, and the collection of their outstanding balances.” For even Mr. Verelst had ‡ now acknowledged, that persons being seized and sent away, without allowing them time to adjust their affairs, would “ find it impossible even to receive the debts lawfully due to them.”

* See the letter from the Court of Directors, Appendix E. Num. XCIII. page 424.

† Dated the 29th November 1768. See Reports of the House of Commons 1773, vol. IV. page 88. Nevertheless, the same General Smith being asked by the Select Committee of the House of Commons, “ Do you know of any renunciation of the eighth article of the treaty with *Sujah Dowlah*, stipulating a freedom in trade ?” did not hesitate to answer—“ I believe I do—I understood that the noble Lord Clive gave it up to *Sejah Dowlah*.—I have it only from hearsay.” See General Smith's evidence, Journals, vol. XXXIII. page 940.

‡ Appendix E. Num. LIX. page 393.

Thus



Thus the banishment of the writer's *Armenian* agents, in particular, was the object of all these violent and contradictory measures. It is however more than probable that the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* had as much reason as the king to be dissatisfied with the conduct of Colonel *Smith's* gomastah, *Ismaelbeg*, and of certain gomastahs who were employed by Mr. *Rumbold* at * *Goruckpoor*, a district within his own immediate jurisdiction. The Rajah *Bulwantsing* might also have had equal reason to be displeased with the behaviour of other black gomastahs at *Mirzapore*, in the service of gentlemen of influence. But the natives of the upper countries, who are not of such timid dispositions as the people in *Bengal*, will resist oppression by force. It was, therefore, only such gomastahs as were supported by much influence and power, who could commit great violences, and against whom the Nabob, or Rajah, might not dare to complain to the Presidency. The *Armenians* who were employed by the writer possessed no influence; they traded entirely on a footing with other natives; and those Princes, encouraged thereto as they had been, could, as we have already observed, have had no apprehensions from an exertion of their own power against them. But the real fact was, that there were no complaints made against them, but such as had been framed by the gentlemen who were concerned together in bringing about their confinement and expulsion; for by the very letters which were expressly calculated to effect the imprisonment of these *Armenian* merchants, in particular, as agents to the writer, Governor *Verelst* appears † to have been first informed of the *great violences, extortions, and oppressions of gomastahs* by the letters he received from Colonel *Smith*.

The designs against these particular *Armenians* being thus accomplished, under such pretences as have been mentioned, the President and gentlemen of Council continued their own gomastahs in those countries, and went on with their trade. The pious resolutions of Governor *Verelst*, ‡ *not to grant any perwānabs or dustucks for trade beyond the limits of the three provinces*, for the relief of the distressed natives, were not to be construed to extend to himself, or his friends. He had not only granted a *perwānab* to Messrs. Colo-

* Appendix E. Num. XXIV. page 367.

† Ibid. Num. XVI. page 361. and Num. XX. page 364. See also *Verelst's* Appendix, Num. LXXXV. and Num. LXXXVI. page 187, where he gives partial extracts, as copies of the letters here referred to.

‡ Appendix E. Num. XIII. page 359. Num. XVI. page 361. and Num. XX. page 364.



nel *Smith*, *Russell*, and Company, but likewise to Messrs. * *Alexander* and *Jekyll*; and with respect to his own *gomastah*, or agent for diamonds, who was also continued at *Banâras*, he obtained another *perwânâh* from the Nabob, † exempting him from duties on that branch of trade, and severely reprimanded the Rajah *Bulwantsing* for “demanding duties from the merchants selling diamonds to Mr. Chamber,” HIS SAID AGENT.—In the same letter to that Rajah, he also strongly enforced the currency of English *dustucks* in that Prince’s territories, with reserving to himself the privilege of correcting abuses therein; while the business pretended to be taken from *Ismaelbeg* was transferred to the management of one *Feyaz Ally Khawn* still “on account of English gentlemen,” who have continued the trade in those provinces uninterruptedly to the present time.

The patience of the reader would be exhausted in tracing the President, Select Committee, and Council of *Calcutta* through all the mazes of misrepresentation, falsehood, and wicked policy, by which they effected, and afterwards endeavoured to screen and justify their persecutions of the innocent *Armenian* merchants, even in the territories of such Princes as they pretended to say were independent, and who, from justice and humanity, fought in vain to protect them. We must, therefore, refer our indulgent readers to the Appendix, which under the Letter E. pages 345 to 433, contains in regular order, every material paper that has come to our knowledge, and will throw further light on this matter; while we reserve a separate chapter for our observations on the cases of the *Armenians* in general, and of these injured men in particular.—Yet in all these selfish pursuits the President and Council had the modesty to plead public orders, and pretend the service of the Company; than which nothing could be more contrary to truth, or more repugnant to every principle of reason and equity.

But the real *merits* of our *Calcutta* reformers, on this occasion, cannot be shewn in a truer light than by exposing the duplicity of their conduct, from their own words.—Upon the letter of complaints already quoted from Colonel *Smith* to the Select Committee, the pious President thus addresses the Colonel:

† “It is with some astonishment, as well as concern, that I observe the representations you have been pleased to make to the

* Appendix note, page 358.

† Ibid. Num. XXIX. page 370.

‡ See Mr. *Verelst*’s letter of the 31st January 1768 to Colonel *Smith*. Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 937.



“ Committee, in your letter to them of the 3d instant, respecting
 “ the private trade carried on by *English* gomastahs in the Sircars
 “ of *Ghazipoor* and *Mirzapore*, and other parts of the Nabob *Sujah*
 “ *al Dowlah*’s dominions. I therefore have taken this method to
 “ acquaint you with my sentiments thereon ; for, notwithstanding
 “ I am at all times determined to preserve and support my prerogative
 “ in its due extent, and to endeavour at conducting all affairs
 “ of a public nature to the best of my abilities, upon what I esteem
 “ the most steady, uniform, and solid plan, yet no difference of
 “ opinion in those points shall have any sway with me, when mat-
 “ ters of private concern are under my consideration.

“ The orders of the Company, and the resolutions of the Com-
 “ mittee, are positive, that no private trade shall be carried on
 “ *without* these provinces, and the penalty to those who shall dis-
 “ obey them, no less than dismissal from the service. Yet, it
 “ appears by your letter, that they are disobeyed, and that, too,
 “ in such a manner, as to oblige the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* to
 “ complain to you of the oppressions and extortions of *English* go-
 “ mastahs ; the truth of which was confirmed by *Bulwantsing*.

“ You have expressed your apprehensions of fatality to the Com-
 “ pany’s possessions, unless the most vigorous measures be pursued
 “ by the Committee to annihilate these complaints, so fraught
 “ with pernicious consequences ; and informed the Committee of
 “ your having assured *Sujah al Dowlah* how desirous you are to
 “ strike at the root of this evil, and that it should be your care,
 “ that the perwānah for an exclusive privilege to make saltpetre on
 “ account of the *English*, granted to *Ismaelbeg*, should be returned.

“ Called upon, as the Committee are, in this public manner,
 “ were they to content themselves with only recording your let-
 “ ter upon the face of their proceedings, the Court of Directors
 “ might very possibly conceive an idea of your attentive and faith-
 “ ful services at their expence, or perhaps see cause to suspect their
 “ disinterestedness and integrity. If, on the contrary, they second
 “ your remonstrance with that degree of vigour you tell them they
 “ should, by resolving to detect and punish every aggressor, may
 “ not your name happen to stand recorded at the head of the list ?

“ You have particularized *Ismaelbeg* ; should they inquire by whom
 “ he has been employed, will it not be found that he was em-
 “ ployed by you ? Employed, not only in carrying on a trade pro-
 “ hibited by the Company, but even to raise that trade into a mo-

“ nopoly



“ monopoly throughout the greatest part of the dominions of our
 “ friend and ally ?”

To which, in his letter * of the 8th *February* 1768, the *zealous*
 and *disinterested* Colonel thus replied :

“ Upon what part of my conduct, Sir, can you found such a
 “ question ? Wherein have I acted different from you ? — Could I
 “ conceive the purchasing of saltpetre in *Sujah al Dowlah*’s domi-
 “ nions to be fundamentally wrong, when you yourself wrote to
 “ *Sujah al Dowlah* in favour of Mr. *Russell*’s gomastah ? Could I
 “ conceive it to be a prohibited commerce, when you yourself en-
 “ couraged it ? Could I imagine it contrary to the regulations of
 “ the Select Committee, when you, who presided in that Com-
 “ mittee, made use of your influence to introduce it ?”

Such, in matters of internal policy and external commerce, have
 been the cruel and tyrannic transactions of a government of civil
 and military harpies, in support of their own most iniquitous and
 oppressive monopolies in trade ; which were alike hurtful to indivi-
 duals, to the Company, to the subjected provinces, and to this
 kingdom : and which not being warranted by the laws or practice
 of *Hindostan*, much less of *Great Britain*, can be fairly contemplated
 in no other light, than as crimes of the greatest magnitude, and
 which merit the severest punishment.

* See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 939.



C H A P. IV.

ON the TYRANNIC, MILITARY, and ARBITRARY PRE-TENDED JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS of the COMPANY'S RULING-SERVANTS in BENGAL, from their IMPRISONMENT of the WRITER'S AGENTS, until their illegally STRIPPING him of his OFFICE of ALDERMAN, and their FORCIBLE SEIZURE and EMBARKATION of his person, on board the SHIP VALENTINE, to be transported to EUROPE.

THE many deserved miscarriages which the gentlemen of the Committee and Council at *Calcutta* experienced in their commercial undertakings, did not a little contribute to the increase of their animosity towards the writer, whose trade, in the conclusion of his concerns, continued as prosperous to himself, as it was really serviceable to the Company and country, in spite of all the obstructions they could give it. But desperate malice at length inspired them with the resolution to apply military power, for the accomplishment of their ends, in order to crush by this, the last instrument of tyranny, what they could not undermine by craft.

The object of their projected monopoly of cotton was of such magnitude, that it could not be accomplished with all the money, influence, and power of the whole confederacy ; for, besides what the writer and others brought from the western countries down the *Ganges*, far greater quantities than had been expected were likewise imported by sea. They, therefore, found themselves greatly disappointed in their expectations ; so that Colonel *Smith* might have had good reason for asserting, * *he did not gain any advantage by his purchase of Mr. Verelst's share* ; though the merchant might have outwitted the soldier in the bargain.

But all possible means were used by the monopolizers in power for the most advantageous disposal of their cotton. In the province of *Patna*, under *Shetabroy*, a new and unprecedented duty was laid on what came down the *Ganges*, which almost amounted to a prohibition of importation in that way ; and at *Murshedabad*, *Mahomed Reza Khawin* was employed to dispose of a considerable quantity

* See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 939.

that



that was assigned to him, with a *recommendatory* letter from Governor *Vereft*. And so very strenuous was that MINISTER, in the beneficial disposal of this consignment to the Zemindars and other inhabitants, that the poor people have been seen going, in a body, with cotton on their * heads as a signal of distress, to complain to Mr. *Francis Sykes*, then *English* Resident, or Company's dictator, at the *Durbar*.

With respect to the writer's particular trade, a party of the Company's black-troops, detached from Colonel *Smith's* brigade at *Illahabad*, actually stopped and seized a fleet of his boats, on their way to market, loaded with cotton, which, after many difficulties, was obliged to be unloaded and resold, to a considerable loss, at *Banâras*. His black-gomastahs in the province of *Illahabad* were imprisoned and † flogged; and Captain *Gabriel Harper*, the Colonel's agent and partner at *Owd*, not only took and forcibly detained from another black-gomastah of the writer's, two *perwânahs* for saltpetre, granted him by the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, under his hand and seal, but the people employed by him in the saltpetre-buiness, caused the writer's warehouses and property likewise to be plundered; particularly at a place called *Lalpoor Carowty*, where he thereby lost three thousand maunds of saltpetre, besides several boats.

In consequence of a request from Colonel *Smith*, permission had been granted him by the Select Committee, on the ‡ 23d *February* 1768, to repair to the Presidency, in order to prepare for *Europe*. Disappointed in his views of trade, and perhaps not a little piqued at the protection and countenance shewn by the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* and the Rajah *Bulwantjing* to his rivals, the *Armenian* merchants, he returned to the Presidency with no small degree of resentment towards the writer, whose correspondence with those *Armenians* had contributed to thwart the “commercial § system” of the Colonel and his partners.

Soon after his return to the Presidency, therefore, on the 4th *May* 1768, the Colonel entered a flaming || minute on the proceedings of the Council against the writer; in which he *emphatically*

* *Wynber Baucheracht*, the present Governor of the *Dutch* settlements in *Bengal*, was at *Byd-pore* an eye-witness of one of these extraordinary visits to Mr. *Sykes*.

† Appendix E. Num. LXXXII. page 412.

‡ *Ibid.* page 363.

§ Journals, vol. XXXIII. page 939.

|| Appendix F. Num. XXIII. page 482. Also *Vereft's* Appendix, page 207.



reminded the board, that their former resolutions for sending him a prisoner to *England* stood unrevoked and unexecuted, although he had continued *corresponding with the country-powers*; that the consequences of suffering him with impunity to bid defiance to the authority of the board, were so very obvious, that it was unnecessary to mention them: but when he read an unanimous DECREE of the board, “for taking such measures, on this occasion, as appeared absolutely necessary for the *public-service*, he could not but conjure the President and Council to support the dignity of government, by enforcing obedience to their own resolutions.”

In consequence of this minute, it was unanimously “*agreed and resolved*, that the writer should be positively sent a prisoner to *Europe*, by the first ship to be dispatched from the Presidency.”

Mr. *Edward Fenwick*, a gentleman in the service of the Company, and employed in the Secretary's office, first gave information of this resolution of the board to the writer, who saw himself thereby likely to be deprived of what remained of his fortune, after the imprisonment of his agents. Thus threatened with violence, and finding no redress could be had from the Governor and Council, who had already violated every principle of private honour and public justice; the duty which he owed to himself and his family, as well as to those who had entrusted him with much of their property, all which would be exposed to entire loss from the seizure and transportation of his person, now prompted him to seek protection from the laws of *Great Britain*. This, however unfavourable the prospect, being his only remaining resource, he therefore resolved to apply for the protection of the Grand Jury. He further thought that such an application would give the President and Council an opportunity of legally proving such misdemeanours, if any existed, as they might think would justify their resolutions against him. From the disposition, at that time, of the community in general, if he had been found guilty of any attempt subversive either of the public peace, or the interests of the Company, it was beyond a doubt, that the juries would very readily have concurred with the resolutions of the Governor and Council; who themselves would also necessarily sit in judgment on the trial of his complaint at the General Quarter Session.

Yet, under all these disadvantages, on the 27th *May* 1768, the writer ventured to present to the Grand Jury, then sworn and impanelled, an * information against Colonel *Richard Smith*, for hav-

* Appendix F. Num. XXIV. page 483.



ing illegally conspired with other persons, and agreed together in writing, to seize, imprison, and transport him to parts unknown, beyond the seas: on which ground he claimed the protection of the Jury, for the security of his person and property, and of that of other persons under his management. He further prayed that Colonel *Smith* and his accessaries might be bound to preserve the peace, and, on conviction of the crimes charged against them, be obliged to give special bail for their future good behaviour; with proper securities for the sum of one hundred and ten thousand pounds sterling; and for such other losses as might accrue to the writer, in case the said Colonel *Smith* and his associates should illegally make use of the military force under their command, to carry their resolutions against him into execution.

After presenting this information, the jury required of the writer to produce his witnesses to prove the facts asserted therein; whereupon he gave in the names of several gentlemen: among which were those of Mr. *Simeon Droz*, Sheriff and Secretary to the Council; Mr. *Edward Baber*, Deputy Secretary and Clerk of the Peace, and other clerks in office. The justices on the bench were Governor *Verelst*, *James Alexander*, *Claud Russell*, *William Aldersey*, and *Charles Ffloyer*, Esquires.

The Grand Jury then proceeded to call upon the witnesses, in order to take their evidence; but particularly upon Messrs. *Simeon Droz*, *Edward Baber*, *William Dumbleton*, and *Shearman Bird*, gentlemen who were then present. They first sent Mr. *George Lear*, one of the jurors, with Mr. *Droz*, to Mr. *Baber* the Clerk of the Peace, in order to be sworn before the judges, which the court refused to admit; alleging, that the “calling upon one of the officers
“ of the court, who was then upon duty, in so sudden a manner,
“ without having obtained their leave, or given him any previous
“ notice, or informing him what he was to be sworn to, was a
“ very improper method of proceeding; and unless the affair was
“ of very material consequence, and his evidence immediately ne-
“ cessary, they desired it might be dispensed with.”—Upon this, the Jury sent Mr. *Lear*, first, with Mr. *Baber*, then with Mr. *Dumbleton*, and afterwards with Mr. *Bird*; to all of whom the court successively objected, for the same reasons as before alleged; with further adding, “they could not but remark, that in the persons
“ of the Sheriff, Clerk of the Peace, Messrs. *Dumbleton* and *Bird*;
“ Mr. *Lear* had called upon the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and
“ Assistants to the President and Council of *Fort William*, in their
“ Secretary’s



“ Secretary’s office ; that the two latter were young persons barely
 “ turned of sixteen years of age, who were entrusted with the
 “ knowledge of the records and proceedings of the Governor and
 “ Council, which they were bound to keep secret, under penalty
 “ of forfeiting the Company’s service ; and that if Mr. *Bolts* had
 “ called upon these young persons as witnesses, in order to make
 “ them disclose the proceedings of the Governor and Council, they
 “ could not but object to young persons being called upon in so
 “ unprepared a manner.”

Mr. *Lear* then withdrew ; and the gentlemen of the Grand Jury
 soon after came into court with the following address to the
 judges :

“ The Grand Jury, impanelled and sworn at a Quarter Ses-
 “ sions, held this 27th day of *May* 1768, in the town of *Calcutta*,
 “ take this method to acquaint the Honourable Justices of the
 “ Peace, now sitting, that an information has been laid before
 “ them, on oath, by *William Bolts* inhabitant of *Calcutta* ; where-
 “ upon the Grand Jury summoned two witnesses, named in the
 “ information, in order to their being examined ; one of whom
 “ being the Sheriff, and the other, Clerk of the Peace, the bench
 “ of justices thought proper to refuse their attendance on the
 “ Grand Jury ; whereupon other witnesses were summoned by an
 “ officer of the court, as the Grand Jury conceive, in the usual
 “ manner ; which the bench of justices were pleased to disapprove
 “ of, as the Grand Jury understood by a message from the bench,
 “ delivered to them by Mr. *George Lear*, one of their body ; who
 “ also delivered further, that the bench were of opinion, *that the*
 “ *Grand Jury seemed to aim at assuming a power superior to THE*
 “ GOVERNMENT.

“ The Grand Jury are deeply concerned to find that their en-
 “ deavours to acquit themselves of their duty, as bound by their
 “ oaths, should have brought upon them so severe a reflection from
 “ the bench, which they are not in the least conscious of having de-
 “ served ; and they will venture to say, that no Grand Jury was
 “ ever better disposed to THE GOVERNMENT than the present.

“ In case the bench do persevere in their resolution, of not per-
 “ mitting the Grand Jury to examine witnesses upon oath, touch-
 “ ing the said information, and refuse to swear in such witnesses,
 “ the Grand Jury have no other method of proceeding left (as
 “ without the examination of witnesses they cannot collect the
 “ opinions of the jurors) but to deliver in the said information to



“ the bench of justices, with this address, *who will then be answer-*
able for all consequences.”

(Signed)

CORNELIUS GOODWIN
 Foreman.”

The jurors were then desired to re-consider their proceedings ; and after retiring for some time, they returned into court, and again presented their address unaltered. Upon this the judges told the jurors “ their presentment was really *a misrepresentation of facts :*” and, with assigning such frivolous reasons as were calculated to evade taking cognizance of the writer’s complaints, as inserted at large in the * Appendix, they abruptly adjourned the court to the 27th of *August 1768* ; although they knew there were several *Englishmen*, then prisoners for misdemeanours, and demanding their trials, to which they had a legal right.

The official proceedings of the President and Council, which contain their orders for the government of the Company’s settlements, having heretofore been considered as public records, to which every individual had access ; it was reserved for Governor *Verelst* and his coadjutors, to sit in solemn judgment on a bench of justice and declare, that they contained secrets which could not be divulged to a Grand Jury by the Company’s servants, “ without *perjuring themselves, or forfeiting their fidelity to the Company.*”

However, on such principles for judging, did the President and Council proceed to dismiss Mr. *Edward Fenwick* from the service, though bound by no oath of secrecy, for divulging to an accused party their resolution concerning him. The writer, who suspected what might happen, had given in a list of the names of sixteen † other witnesses besides Mr. *Fenwick*, whom he also cautioned with regard to speech, but who, unconscious of any crime, on being questioned by Mr. Secretary *Droz* thereon, did freely acknowledge the informations he had given the writer. What passed respecting that injured gentleman, from the time of his dismissal to that of his restoration to the Company’s service, with the senti-

* See the proceedings, Appendix F. Num. XXV. page 485. And it may be proper here to mention, that, agreeably to their adjournment, the justices did meet on the 27th of *August*. But being apprehensive that the writer would again exhibit his complaint, they only proceeded to call over and *dismiss* the juries, and then adjourned the court to the 27th of the following month ; before which time they took care to imprison him.

† See note, Appendix, page 484.



ments of the Court of Directors on that transaction, may be also seen in the * Appendix.

But the writer was not only left without remedy from the laws of *England* by so arbitrary an interposition of the Governor and Council, then sitting as Judges at the quarter-sessions, but, for a long time afterwards, they likewise detained from him the copies which he had applied for, of the proceedings of the Court : and which were finally delivered to him, FALSIFIED.

The reason alleged for this extraordinary procrastination, as the writer was informed, by letter, from the Clerk of the Peace, Mr. *Edward Baber*, was, that one of the Justices had lost or mislaid the protest of the Grand Jury. Fortunately, one of the Jurors had preserved a copy of the protest, and delivered it to the writer, who having shewn it to the Clerk, the existence of the pretended-lost original was at last acknowledged, and after a delay of a month and three days, certain papers, under the official signature of Mr. *Baber*, were delivered to him, as true copies of the records of the Court of Session.

But the † difference between the contents of those papers and the true records of the proceedings of the Court, on the 27th of *May* 1768, was too gross to escape the notice of a man so deeply interested therein as the writer. Not trusting, however, to his own memory, he shewed them to several gentlemen of the jury, who all confirmed him in his opinion, that *they were falsified* with a view of throwing the blame of quashing his complaint on the gentlemen of the grand jury. Mr. *Baber* too refused to give information, on being asked; which of the justices had pretended to have lost the original protest of the grand jury, or which of them had privately drawn up or dictated the proceedings as they then stood recorded, and to which he had been induced to sign his name; unless compelled so to do by a court of judicature.

The writer, therefore, found himself without any other remedy than that of protesting against the Governor and Council, in their judicial capacities, for all losses and damages that might accrue to him from their arbitrary obstruction of the due course of public justice. It being also currently reported, that they intended to send him by force a prisoner to *England*, in custody of Captain

* Appendix F. Num. XXVI. and XXVII. pages 488 and 489, also parag. XCVII. to XCIX. page 526, and par. LXXVIII. page 553.

† This difference will fully appear in the proceedings of the Court, as inserted in the Appendix, Letter F. Num. XXV. and explained in the note, page 465.



Charles Purvis, on board the ship *Valentine*, then under dispatch, he at the same time protested against them, and against all captains and officers military or naval, or other persons whomsoever, that might, directly or indirectly, be concerned in the seizure, imprisonment, or transportation of his person: and on the 12th of *August* 1768, he personally assisted in the serving of Captain *Purvis* with an authenticated copy of that * protest; which three days afterwards was officially delivered to the board of Council by Mr. *John Holme*, the Notary Public.

Thus menaced with the severest punishment under death, and with the sacrifice of fortune and every prospect in life, it was of the utmost consequence to the writer to obtain authentic copies of the proceedings of the Select Committee, on which they founded his first sentence of banishment, of the 18th of *April* 1767; and also of the real proceedings of the Court of Quarter-sessions, of the 27th of *May* 1768. But there was no prospect of obtaining either, except by a prosecution in the Mayor's Court of the gentlemen whose names were subscribed to the papers delivered to the writer. With this view, therefore, and without any design of injuring those gentlemen, on the 23d of *August* 1768, he filed, in the Mayor's Court, one bill against Mr. *Charles William Boughton*, Clerk to the Select Committee, and another against Mr. *Edward Baber*, Clerk of the Peace.

The complaisance which Mr. *Baber* had shewn, in setting his hand, officially as Clerk, to the falsified records of a court of justice, had introduced him to the more intimate acquaintance of Governor *Verelst*; and upon the report of that gentleman, on the 26th *August* 1768, the Governor informed the † board, “as a farther proof of
“ the writer's misconduct, that instead of duly executing the cove-
“ nants sent out by the Company, prohibiting any of their servants
“ receiving presents, he did elude their orders; and instead of exe-
“ cuting them himself, employed his writer to sign his name for
“ him, who was also one of the subscribing witnesses to the deed.”

* Appendix F. Num. XXVIII. page 490.

† See Mr. *Verelst*'s minute of the 26th of *August* 1768, Appendix, Letter F. Num. XXIX. page 494. Mr. *Verelst*, in the Appendix to his book, page 209, has dated this paper in 1765. If this was not an error of the press, it was artfully calculated to screen the infamy of raking up and misrepresenting a simple and innocent transaction of three years before, in order to injure the writer, without serving his employers, or answering any good purpose whatsoever thereby.



A few days afterwards Mr. *Verelst* repeated this information; which was drawn up in ridiculous form, and on the 5th *September* 1768 laid before the board. The colouring in this second information was greatly heightened, and the most simple and harmless transaction, which had passed above three years before, while the writer was in the service of the Company, was therein set in the most criminal light, in order thereon to ground a heavy charge against him. It was not sufficient for the INFORMER and President of the Council to try the fact, but he proceeded to acquaint the board; that “the
“ said *William Bolts*, being evilly minded and disposed, and wick-
“ edly and fraudulently intending, contriving, and designing to de-
“ ceive, defraud, and impose upon the Company, did, instead of
“ signing and executing the indenture himself, *seduce* his writer to
“ counterfeit and subscribe his name to it, as if it had been really
“ and truly signed and executed by himself, he then knowing the
“ same to be *false and fraudulent*, whereby he, *William Bolts*, be-
“ came guilty of a very *high crime and misdemeanour*.”

It hath been already shewn, that the President and Council had determined to send the writer a prisoner to *England*, although he still continued in his office of one of the Judges of the Mayor's Court. But when this resolution was to be put in execution, they appeared afraid of committing so flagrant a breach of his Majesty's charter. Their absurd application to the Mayor's Court, of the 1st of *October* 1767, to apply for another Alderman, had not produced the desired effect; and it afterwards appeared, that the writer's mode of executing the covenants, in *May or June* 1765, was therefore pitched upon, by the profound wisdom of the board, as a charge against him, on which they resolved, in *September* 1768, to ground their removal of him from his office, before they sent him a prisoner to *England*.

He was served with a copy of Mr. *Verelst*'s charge, and summoned to appear before the board, on the 5th *September* 1768, to answer thereto; but without any intimation being given him, that he was to be thereby affected in his judicial capacity, as an Alderman. He was, however, glad to have this opportunity given him, which was the first and only one he ever had, of being heard in his defence, against the accusations of the President and Council, although they themselves were both the accusers and the judges. As it was thought necessary to have a military officer sit in judgment on the case of so
* *dangerous an inhabitant*, Colonel *Smith* was also summoned on this

* The character given of him in Colonel *Smith*'s own words, already quoted. See Appendix E. Num. VII. page 351.

business,



business, which, notwithstanding all the precaution and secrecy that were employed on the important occasion, at last terminated in the intire disgrace of the President and Council, and the no less shame of the Court of *East India* Directors.

Agreeably to the summons, the writer attended the board on the morning of the said 5th of *September*, with his defence, ready prepared in writing; when the information of the President was produced, and an affidavit of Mr. *Edward Baber*, which had been likewise prepared some days before, and sworn to in private, was also read. But as the writer did not find Mr. *Verelst* there, he insisted, that, unless he was confronted with his accuser, he would not answer any questions that should be put to him. He was thereupon desired to retire, and the doors were shut upon him; while the board, consisting of Mr. *Cartier*, Colonel *Smith*, Messrs. *Becher*, *Russell*, and *Ffloyer*, held a private consultation among themselves, during which several messages were carried, by Mr. *Edward Baber*, to the President, and his answers brought back to the board; and Mr. *John Holme*, Register of the Mayor's Court, was several times called in, and privately consulted.

Upon seeing this extraordinary procedure of men pretending to sit as a court of justice, the writer sent in a message, by Mr. *Thomas Henchman*, requesting that the doors might be opened, and himself admitted to be present at the proceedings which so much concerned him; when the board were pleased to answer, as he was informed by Mr. *Henchman*, "that he should be acquainted with them afterwards."

The informer did not appear that morning, nor would the board admit of the writer's reading, or having read to him, such proceedings as had been already recorded: but upon Mr. *Verelst*'s then consenting to appear, they adjourned to the evening, and required the writer's attendance at the same time.

In the evening he attended; and his accuser being then present, he proceeded to read his defence: in the course of which he declared he had several questions to put to Mr. President *Verelst*. The President thereupon desired to withdraw, alleging, "that he knew nothing
 " farther of the matter than what was contained in the information,
 " which he had already called upon Mr. *Baber* to support; that if
 " Mr. *Bolts* had any questions to put to him, and pleased to commit
 " them to writing, he would answer them in the most candid manner in his power; but that he would not wish to be present when
 " Mr. *Bolts* entered upon his defence, for reasons he would assign,
 " should the board think proper to call on him."

Upon



Upon these suggestions, the board indulgently permitted Mr. *Verelst* to depart, notwithstanding the objections earnestly urged for his attendance by the writer; who thereupon refused to read his defence, but promised to transmit it to the Court of *East India* Directors, to whom he engaged to give the most honourable satisfaction: and he was thereupon ordered to withdraw, but was not for some days acquainted with the resolution which the board had taken upon this inquiry.

There is inserted at large, in the * Appendix, the proceedings of the board of the 5th *September* 1768, on Mr. *Verelst*'s information, together with the writer's † defence, of the same date, in an address to the President and Council; which was delivered in to the board, with two ‡ other letters, to be transmitted to the Court of Directors.

The writer therein acknowledged, that he had not personally signed the covenants, but had directed his || book-keeper to do it for him; that by his authority they were so signed, witnessed, and afterwards personally delivered by him, as his own act and deed; that to suppose the covenants, so executed, were not binding, betrayed the most consummate ignorance; but to avoid the imputation of any intended deceit, if the board doubted their validity, he offered either to acknowledge them afresh as his own act and deed, or to enter into any other indemnification that could with justice be required, for the security of the honourable Company. The Governor well knew that this plain defence was made on the spot by the writer, in answer to his malicious accusation in *September* 1768, although, with unparalleled assurance, in his publication of *December* 1772, Mr. *Verelst* concludes his misrepresentation of this transaction with these words: § “ Yet he (*Bolts*) now attempts to justify his conduct, because a
“ *Lawyer* has lately corrected his former error, by informing him,
“ that his signature, being made with his consent, must be con-
“ sidered as his own act.”

It had not been alleged, that the writer had ever infringed those covenants; and to shew the board that such had never been his intention, he gave them proof, that very soon after the execution of his covenants, he had refused a jagueer of thirty thousand ¶ rupees

* See Appendix F. Num. XXX. page 496.

† Ibid. Num. XXXII. page 505.

‡ Ibid. Num. XXXIII. and XXXIV. pages 520 and 521.

|| A Portuguese writer, a native of the country.

§ *Verelst*'s View, page 35.

¶ 3750 l. sterling



per annum, which the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah* had freely and without any solicitation offered him, as a mark of friendship, for some small services received while living at the writer's house at *Banaras*.

The proof of this fact is likewise given in the * Appendix, with the address already referred to, which contained the writer's defence, in answer to President *Verelst*'s charge. In this address he recriminated strongly on the conduct of the Governor and Council, particularly in support of the truth of his former memorial, of the 12th of *October* 1767; which, as well as the facts asserted in his address of the 5th of *September* 1768, he offered fully to prove before the board. But this did not suit the President and Council, no more than the furnishing the writer with copies of the other charges that had been privately recorded against him on their consultations, for which he again solemnly called upon them without effect. The candid reader, who has the patience to peruse the papers here referred to, will make indulgent allowances for the great defects in style of writings drawn up hastily, in the most distracted and harassed state which it was possible for a man's mind to be immersed in, by the combined efforts of unbounded iniquity and power. He will also make equal allowances for the false ideas which it was natural for a man to entertain who had learned more from books than experience, concerning the reality of the liberty, the protection, and the facility of obtaining justice, with which the subject is flattered in theory under a *British* government.

It was not till the 9th of *September* 1768, that the writer discovered the President and Council were going to remove him from his seat, as an Alderman in the Mayor's Court; and that the Register of the Court, Mr. *John Holme*, was, in concert with them, acting an underhand and treacherous part, to forward that measure; having officially received a letter for the Court, from the President and Council, relative to such dismissal, which, of his own authority, he, the Register, † had returned to be corrected, and rendered more effectual.

On the writer's complaining to the Court, of this conduct of the Register, a full Court was ordered to be summoned, purposely to take this matter into consideration, and to determine whether he should not be dismissed from his offices, as a servant of the Court. But during the debates on these proceedings of the 9th of *September*, the Register added to his former crime, by an indecent behaviour, for which he

* See Appendix, page 519.

† See a copy of the proceedings of the Mayor's Court, on the 9th of *September* 1768, in the Appendix, F. Num. XXXI. page 504.



was ordered to be committed to prison : and although, at the writer's intercession, his commitment was remitted, yet his conduct in both cases was of such a nature, that it may safely be asserted he would not have escaped dismissal, as a servant of the Court, in a similar situation, in any other part of the *British* dominions.

On the 13th of *September* 1768, a full Court was assembled ; during the interval between which and the last Court, the notification from the President and Council, for the dismissal of the writer from his seat as an Alderman, had been made perfect, under date of the 5th of *September*, and re-delivered to the Register ; on whose behalf also strong applications were made, by Mr. *Verelst* and other members of the Council, to the Aldermen. It may be hard to say how far the minds of any gentlemen on the bench might have been influenced by fears of being deprived of dustucks or such other *douceurs* as had been allowed them by the * President ; or of being themselves dismissed from their offices, or sent prisoners to *England*. But although the Court was called for their determination concerning the Register's conduct, they postponed the business of the day on which they were expressly summoned, to take into previous consideration the letter of the President and Council relative to the removal of the writer.

It appeared, by the proceedings of the President and Council, of the 5th of *September*, on Mr. *Verelst*'s information of the writer's not having signed the covenants with his own hand, that upon his refusing to make his defence, except in the face of his accuser, “ they were of opinion he had by no means acquitted himself of the
“ charge brought against him ; but, on the contrary, had in part
“ acknowledged it. They therefore deemed him an improper person
“ to be a member of a court of justice ; and by virtue of the power
“ vested in them by the royal charter, granted them in the 29th year
“ of the reign of King *George* the Second, they accordingly disquali-
“ fied him from being any longer an Alderman of the honourable
“ the Mayor's Court.”

Their letter to the Court on this occasion was as follows :

“ To the honourable the Mayor's Court of *Calcutta*.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ The honourable President and Council having, by virtue of
“ the royal charter granted in the 26th year of the reign of our So-
“ vereign Lord *George* the Second, for reasonable cause, thought pro-

* See Mr. *Verelst*'s ideas of the propriety of such benevolent distributions. Appendix, pages 220 and 221.



“ per to remove Mr. *William Bolts* from sitting as an Alderman in
 “ your Court, I have it in command from them to acquaint you,
 “ that he is accordingly removed, and his seat vacated.

I am, Gentlemen,

Fort William,
the 5th Sept. 1768.

Your most obedient humble servant,
 (Signed) EDWARD BABER, Sec.”

The Court taking the said letter into consideration were of opinion, “ that the notification of the President and Council, received
 “ by the Court, was grounded on a power vested in them by the
 “ charter ; and that by the aforesaid power Mr. *William Bolts* should
 “ stand dismissed, and that his seat as an Alderman of the Court
 “ should be vacated accordingly :” one Alderman alone dissenting from this determination, because the nature of the complaint against the writer had not been shewn to the Court, who ought to be the judges of their own members ; and because, in his opinion, the President and Council had no power to dismiss an Alderman, without the concurrence of the Mayor’s Court.

The proceedings of that day, inserted in the * Appendix, are of a curious nature, and will serve to evince the weight of the arguments adduced in the first part of *Considerations on India Affairs*, for the necessity of rendering the Mayor’s Courts wholly independent of the President and Council ; as they ought to be made at all the other settlements of the Company in *India*, where Courts of Justice are still shamefully permitted to subsist, under the same terrors and dependance as the late Court at *Calcutta*.

As the favourite object of the Governor and Council, with respect to the writer, was now accomplished, he had nothing remaining to expect but consequential ruin. Great industry had been exerted to inculcate a belief, that he had merited dismissal from his seat in the Mayor’s Court, by a crime of a very heinous nature : and as there was no printing in the settlement, it was difficult for him to vindicate his injured character, while he was every instant expecting to be seized by a military force. He, however, thought the community had a right to be informed of the grounds on which one of their magistrates had been deprived of his office, and was to be seized and transported beyond sea, like a felon. He, therefore, caused a paper to be stuck up in two or three public places, wherein he advertised for persons to work a printing-press ; and in the mean time offered to communicate in manuscript several matters which it intimately

* Appendix F. Num. XXXV. page 522.



concerned every individual to be acquainted with.—There was nothing in this paper that could give offence to an unprejudiced mind; nor should we have troubled the reader with so trivial a circumstance, if it had not been given by Mr. *Verelst* in his * book, and by that gentleman and the Council in *Bengal* sent to the Court of Directors, as a convincing proof of the † turbulency of the writer's disposition. It has, therefore, also a place in our ‡ Appendix.

The board were so anxious to execute their resolutions for seizing and sending the writer a prisoner to *Europe*, that they would not allow him the usual time of fourteen days, granted by charter in the case of an Alderman's motion, for an appeal to his Majesty in Council. On the 13th *September* 1768, they took into consideration his letters of the 5th and 12th, when Mr. *Verelst* § “*de-*”
 “*fired it might be recorded, that he solemnly declared every after-*”
 “*tion contained in Mr. Bolts's letter to the Court of Directors,*”
 “*which tended to reflect on his character, was infamously scanda-*”
 “*lous and false, and that he should particularly answer Mr. Bolts's*”
 “*accusations, when more at leisure.*”——They further remarked, that it became more particularly incumbent on them to enforce their resolution of *November* 1767, for seizing the person of the writer, and forcibly sending him to *England*; because, as they alleged, he had obstinately refused to comply with their repeated orders for that purpose; had persisted to insult their authority and government, and to subvert the principles of subordination; and had thereby aggravated every circumstance of his conduct.

The President likewise informed the board of the doubts, in point of legality, which Captain *Purvis* had expressed about receiving and detaining him on board the ship *Valentine*, and therefore, in order to remove every apprehension of that kind entertained by the Captain, they agreed and resolved to give him an indemnification, being, as they said, *convinced of the legality of the measure, from several acts of parliament*; and that it would meet with the approbation of the Court of Directors.

* See his Appendix, page 210.

† See the last paragraph of the postscript to their general letter *per Valentine*. Appendix F. Num. XLVI. page 535.

‡ Ibid. Num. XXXVIII. page 529.

§ Ibid. Num. XXXVI. page 524.



On the 19th *September* 1768, the final * meeting was held on this business, by the President and Council; at which Colonel *Smith* entered a minute, in his usual style, against the writer's veracity, and particularly in support of the independency of the poor *MOGUL EMPEROR*, against a paragraph contained in the writer's letter of the 5th; which, as it relates more immediately to the country-politics, shall be taken further notice of in a subsequent chapter. In consequence of the doubts which Captain *Charles Purvis* had expressed concerning the legality of receiving the writer on board the Ship *Valentine*, when sent against his own consent, the Captain was also called before them; and after that business was adjusted, a security † bond for fifty thousand pounds sterling was given him, as an indemnification for conveying the writer a prisoner to *England*.

Under the same date, the several official-orders deemed requisite for this business, were likewise written by direction of the board; one from Mr. Secretary *Baber* to the writer; one, signed by the President and Council, to Captain *Robert Coxe*, the military officer who commanded the party destined to seize the writer; one to Captain *Charles Purvis*, and one to the marine officers who had charge of the Company's pilot-sloops: copies of all which are inserted in the ‡ Appendix, together with the very curious arguments, and sentiments expressed on these transactions by President *Verelst*, his Select Committee and Council, in their letters by the *Valentine* to the Court of *East India* Directors.

In the morning of the 23d *September* Captain *Coxe* came to the writer's house, with a party of twenty-seven armed soldiers; some of whom were placed with their fixed bayonets on the stair-case and round the house, while others were kept in the street, at a small distance. Having produced his authority, he declared, that if the writer did not voluntarily repair on board the *Valentine*, then ready

* Appendix F. Num. XL. page 529.

† Ibid. Num. XLI. page 531. •

‡ See Secretary *Baber's* order to the writer, Ibid. Num. XLII. page 532. Ditto, the board's order to Captain *Robert Coxe*, ibid. Num. XLIII. page 533. Ditto, to Captain *Charles Purvis*, ibid. Num. XLIV. page 534. Ditto, Secretary *Baber's* order to the pilots, ibid. Ditto, extract of a letter from the President and Select Committee to the *East India* Directors, by the *Valentine*. Dated the 13th *September* 1768, ibid. Num. XXXVII. page 525. Ditto, extract from the postscript of a letter from the President and Council to the *East India* Directors. Dated the 21st *September* 1768, ibid. Num. XLVI. page 535; with an extract from an additional letter, by the same Ship *Valentine*. Dated the 24th *September* 1768, ibid. Num. XLVII. page 536.



for sea, he should compel him by force, agreeably to his orders. The writer, who refused to go, prevailed on the Captain to allow him about two hours to put his own and his wife's cloaths, together with some of his books and papers, into chests, to be taken with them. After this he was permitted to stay a little longer, in order to sign such powers of attorney and instructions as appeared immediately necessary to secure as much as possible of the scattered property of himself and his employers; all which was done in the most imperfect and confused manner, while his house was filled with astonished spectators. The Captain of the party soon growing * impatient for his prisoner's departure, at length forced him from his inward apartments, and marched him through the streets surrounded by soldiers; *leaving the doors of his house open, and his papers and effects at the mercy of the populace.* He was followed by his wife, whose infirm mother had only a momentary glance of her as she was passing along; and, by a speedy death, became one of the first victims to such illegal and inhuman violence. In this situation, he was escorted on board of one of the Company's schooners, then laying at anchor off the town of *Calcutta*, and conducted down the river to *Ingellee*.

In the afternoon of the 30th of *September* 1768, he was carried, by his military guard, along-side the *Valentine*, in order to be forced aboard; whereof he apprized Captain *Purvis*, by † letter, and requested he would resist by force the violence intended, in order to free him from such illegal bondage, and thereby save him from ruin. But no interposition resulting from that letter, he was forced up the side of the ship; Captain *Cove* at the same time declaring, that he delivered him to Captain *Purvis* as a prisoner, and he, in reply, protesting he did not receive him as such. On observing this farce, the writer demanded one of the boats that then lay along-side, in order to go ashore; but Captain *Purvis* refused the ship's boat, saying it was *against positive orders*; and Captain *Cove* swore, by G—D, he should not go in any of the others. In this situation was he carried a prisoner out to sea; and on the 3d of *October* 1768, the pilot, when leaving the ship, not only made the same excuse as Captain *Purvis* had before done, for not taking the prisoner from the ship, but moreover declared, that he had received express orders not even to carry a letter from him ashore.

* It is represented, in Mr. *Verelji's* book, that the Captain was afraid the writer intended to procure himself to be arrested for debt. See his Appendix, Num. 129. page 218.

† Appendix F. Num. XLVIII. page 536.

Thus



Thus was a destined victim to the unrestrained avarice and tyranny of a set of men whose actions have been perhaps without parallel on human records, in the basest manner, secretly calumniated; falsely accused; deprived of the protection of the laws of this kingdom; and sentenced to banishment, without being confronted with an accuser.—But as if those injuries which depreciated him in the eyes of his late constituents, and blasted all his prospects in life, were not sufficient to satiate their unbounded lust of despotism and rapine, after being half ruined in his fortune by the sudden imprisonment of his mercantile agents, he was, without a crime, and without a hearing, first stripped of an office which he held for life, under his Majesty's royal charter and the sanction of parliament; then suddenly seized by a military force; torn from his family and effects; conducted to close confinement; and, finally, like a felon, transported from one side of the globe to the other.

CHAP. V.

PROCEEDINGS of the COMPANY'S RULING SERVANTS in BEN-
GAL, and of their DIRECTORS in ENGLAND, relative to the
WRITER; from the forcible SEIZURE and TRANSPORTATION
of his Person to ENGLAND in *September 1768*, until his final
Ruin.

NO sooner was the writer conveyed from *Bengal*, than Presi-
dent *Verelst* directed his batteries of persecution against the
solicitor, or attorney, who had the misfortune to act for him in
the Mayor's Court; particularly in the charge of his suits against
Mr. *Baber* and Mr. *Boughton*.

Being met, on the 11th *October 1768*, the Mayor's Court
without any motion made by any of the parties, of their own ac-
cord, complaisantly ordered a full Court to be summoned, to con-
sider, whether the bills of complaint, filed in those causes, should
be answered, pleaded to, demurred to, or dismissed; although they
had been regularly admitted and filed on the 23d *August 1768*.
By management between the members of the Court and the Re-
gister, they were accordingly dismissed in the most extraordinary
manner, under the pretence of orders from the writer, as may be
seen by the copies of the Court-proceedings of the * 11th and 14th
October 1768: and when the copies of the bills were required, at
a subsequent period, they were not to be † found in the repositories
of the Court.

Application had been previously made to the Court, by President
Verelst, against the attorney, in a letter which was afterwards *post-
dated* the 8th *November 1768*, to which we refer ‡ in preference to
any comment, as an application, *by private letter, to a Court of
Justice*, is the truest representation that can be given of the politi-
cal talents of Mr. *Verelst* for presiding over a great commercial com-
munity.

In the letter referred to, the President complained of the attor-
ney, for filing the writer's bills against *Baber* and *Boughton*; alleg-

* Appendix I. Num. I. and Num. II. pages 613 and 614.

† Ibid. Num. III.

‡ Ibid. G. Num. I. page 561.



ing, “ they were infamous and scandalous libels, filed with a view “ to asperse, defame, and injure his character:” and he even recommended to the Court the punishment of the offending attorney, in order “ to prevent others in future from attempts to defame and vilify what is esteemed most sacred, their neighbour’s good name and reputation.”

The President’s complaint was equally groundless and irregular. There was nothing in the bills that concerned his character, however it might have been affected by the event of the suits, unless the barely mentioning of his * *Honour*’s name was to be guilty of vilifying defamation. But had it been otherwise, it is an established principle, that whatever is set forth, in a mere application for remedy, to a proper and competent jurisdiction, cannot be impeached as libellous, whether false or true. False allegations are made at the risk of the party; but no attorney is answerable for the truth of a declaration, or bill, which he is entrusted by his client to file. He is compellable by law to file it; and if it appear afterwards to be groundless, or scandalous, the Court to which it is addressed may punish the party, not the attorney, by dismissing it with costs.

The attorney first gave an honest and spirited answer to President *Verelst*’s complaint, under date the 10th + *February* 1769; but, from the very extraordinary persecutions which he † underwent, he soon found himself on the brink of ruin. The intimidated attorney, therefore, suffering himself to be cajoled with fair promises, on the part of Mr. *Verelst*, withdrew the former, and, on the 31st *March* 1769, gave in another answer, which, though but a private letter, was ordered by the Court to be recorded on their proceedings; and was formally transmitted by the President and Council to the Court of Directors, as a § testimonial, in support of the President’s “ good name and reputation,” under the hand of the writer’s solicitor; who, in return, was at last ruined || for what he had done.

The transactions here alluded to, afford such a picture of the state of justice in *Bengal*, at that period, as would scarcely be credited, if the facts were not vouched in our Appendix by incontrovertible

* The Company’s Governors in *India* were addressed under this title.

+ Appendix G. Num. II. page 563.

† Ibid. Num. III. and Num. IV. pages 563 and 569.

§ Ibid. Num. V. page 571.

|| Ibid. Num. VI. and Num. VII. pages 574 and 575.



authorities. Had we not the evidence before us, it would also be equally difficult to believe, that Messrs. *Cartier, Smith, Becher, Russell, and Ffloyer*, whether as gentlemen or as lawyers, but much less as judges in a supreme Court of Justice, could have suffered to be transmitted to *England*, for the perusal of his most Sacred Majesty in Council, a paper called a *Plea and Answer*, to the writer's appeal against themselves, in which they * asserted, upon his mode of executing the covenants by deputy, *that he had been guilty of FELONY without benefit of clergy*, and that they had, THEREUPON, *removed him from his seat as Alderman*.

Nor- was their candour less conspicuous than their sense, or honesty, on this occasion. They pretended to doubt the writer's right of appeal; alleged that it ought to have been lodged and prosecuted against President *Verelst*, the informer: and although they had sent him away a prisoner before the expiration of the † fourteen days allowed by the charter for appealing, they urged, as an objection, his not having personally signed the appeal, and lodged it within the fourteen days. But passion having confounded their reason, they had made themselves idiots in the mad pursuit of revenge.

By a fatality attending the writer, he was equally unfortunate under the judgment of the Court of *East India* Directors, whose minds appeared to have been prejudiced against him by the various accusations, minutes, and proceedings, which had been secretly penned to his prejudice, and transmitted to them; for without examination into a single fact, they readily coincided with the President and Council of *Calcutta* in all points against him; as may be particularly seen by the 80th paragraph of the Court's general letter to *Bengal* of the 11th *November* 1768, which was as follows:

“ Mr. *Bolts* has been a very unprofitable and unworthy servant
 “ of the Company's. His conduct has been distinguished by a te-
 “ nacious adherence to those pernicious principles relative to the
 “ inland-trade, in which he appears to have been conspicuously
 “ oppressive by repeated instances of disobedience to the orders of
 “ his superiors abroad, and above all, the basest ingratitude to the

* See an extract of this extraordinary composition in the Appendix F. Num. XLIX. page 539.

† The writer had sat on the bench as an Alderman on the 13th *September* 1768, and on the 23d he was seized, and sent away by force.



“ Company, under whom he had acquired an ample fortune, in
 “ exposing *their secrets* to M. Gentil at *Sujah al Dowlah's* Court,
 “ and to his agents at other *Hindostan* Courts, which we look
 “ upon in the light of a high crime and misdemeanour. Under
 “ these circumstances, *you are warranted in pursuing the most speedy*
 “ *and effectual measures for freeing the country of so dangerous a mem-*
 “ *ber of society*, and we therefore approve your obliging him to re-
 “ pair to *Europe* by the first opportunity ; which if not already done,
 “ must be carried into execution by the first ship.”

The reader who considers this paragraph, and the facts already laid before him, will perceive that it contains no grounds for any one of the conclusions drawn. But out of respect to the gentlemen who signed the * letter, we will refrain from adding to its ridicule, by a comment ; only observing as to the matters asserted, that the writer was not an unprofitable servant ; that his principles and his practice, relative to the inland trade, were such as tended greatly to the benefit of the country, and of the Company ; that he was never guilty of oppression, by disobedience to his superiors, or otherwise ; that he was not ungrateful towards the Company, and that he had never been entrusted with, or exposed their secrets ; nor ever kept an agent at any of the Courts alluded to.

The reader will also perceive from its date, that this authority from the Court of Directors, to their President and Council, to do as they pleased with the writer, could not have been received in *Bengal* when they seized and sent him away a prisoner. However, it was of such a nature as, together with their party-intrigues, induced that Court to abide by what their servants had done, and to pursue the blow, however much against the interests of the proprietors, or in violation of law and justice.

It had been observed since the tyrannies began to multiply in *Bengal*, that of the many persons who had been injured, beyond example in the *British* history, not one had obtained any redress ; nor had any punishment or censure been inflicted on the perpetra-

* *Hen. Crabb Boulton,*
Sir George Colebrooke,
John Harrison,
Frederick Pigou,
Robert Jones,
John Purling,
Peregrine Cust,

Daniel Wier,
Luke Scrafton,
George Wombwell,
John Woodhouse,
William Snell,
Benjamin Booth,
Sir James Cockburn,

Charles Chambers,
John Stephenson,
John Pardoe,
William James,
E. Holden Cruttenden,
Edward Wheler, and
Peter du Canz, jun. Esquires.



tors : most horrid crimes. After the writer's arrival in *England*, in *April* 1769, he eagerly inquired into the cause of this seeming paradox. Some informed him that the Company's affairs had been governed for several years past by an illiberal and desperate faction, strangers to every principle of a just government; and whose only rule of right had been to support their own friends at all events, and to depress their rivals, or supposed enemies, by every means, legal or illegal, without inquiring further into any complaint. Others informed him, that the whole of this irregularity had proceeded from gentlemen claiming redress from tumultuous general Courts; without making proper applications to the Court of Directors, to whom, in the opinion of the most discreet members of the Company, the consideration of such matters did properly belong.

In conformity to this last-mentioned opinion, and agreeably to his own sentiments, which pointed out every kind of deference to men in authority that did not supersede the equal and manly spirit with which an ingenuous mind is always prepared to resist oppression, on the 19th *May* 1769, the writer presented a respectful petition to the Court of *East India* Directors. He therein set forth the principal acts of oppression he had suffered in *Bengal*, which have already been related at large in these sheets; and from which the property belonging to himself and his constituents, to an immense amount, had been unavoidably left at the mercy of the natives, in different parts of *India*; most of which, from the oppressions he had suffered, he presumed would never be recovered, without the immediate interposition of the Court. He concluded his petition by representing, that he then appeared before the Court claiming such relief as they might think his case required; being desirous and ready to answer for any part of his conduct that might appear to require justification: and in particular, humbly requesting to be informed, whether the proceedings of their Governor and Council in *Bengal* towards him were vindicated or condemned by the honourable Court.

From the Court of Directors, this petition was referred to the Committees of Correspondence and Law-suits, where the writer attended, by their order, in hopes of being permitted to prove the several allegations therein contained. Instead of this, he was called in to the assembly, and informed, that the Committees could come to no decision upon his petition until they had received the opinion of all the Counsel who had been retained for the Company. After which among other



other things, a part of the paragraph already cited of the 11th *November* 1768, against the writer, was read to him, as if by way of insult, or in derision of his application; and when he requested a copy of it, he was informed, that could not be granted without an order from the whole Court.

The joint Committees, at the same time, expressed a readiness to send out such orders to *Bengal* as might tend to secure the wreck of the writer's fortune, and the property of other persons under his management; forgetting, as it appeared that he complained to them as a public magistrate, in whom the rights of the community had been violated, and the principles of the charter destroyed; and that no particular injury in point of fortune could bear any proportion to those considerations, in the balance of a liberal mind.

In consequence, however, of what passed with those Committees, in a letter to the Court of Directors * of the 26th *May* 1769, the writer specified the nature of the outstanding concerns in *India* on which he required their assistance, and also formally requested, that the Court would be pleased to furnish him with copies of all such minutes and letters; received from their servants in *Bengal*, as stated any particular charge against him; which he the more hoped to obtain, as when Mr. *Vanfittart* was accused by a former Court of Directors, the General Court of Proprietors ordered that he should have copies of all such letters as reflected on his conduct. The writer, therefore, considered the compliance with his request to be no other than an act of justice due to him from a public body, whom he had long and faithfully served, and who ought not to appear as parties against him; seeing that from the evidence on their table, the Directors well knew the falsity of the charges that had been brought against him, by his enemies; merely on their own bare assertions, and which he had ever shewn himself ready to disprove.

The † answer of the Court of Directors to the writer's letter will sufficiently point out where the backwardness lay; and the candid reader will judge how far the practice of supporting secret accusations, without permitting the accused to see them, and *even censuring the party upon such inquisitorial proof, without bearing his defence*, is agreeable to the rules of justice as understood in this country. But although the Court would not permit him to be acquainted

* Appendix H. Num. I. page 577.

† Ibid. Num. II. page 578.



with what he was accused of, they were pleased in their letter by the *Lapwing*, to send a general order to their President and Council in *Bengal*, for giving effectual assistance to his attorneys in facilitating the recovery of his outstanding concerns, and those of his constituents.

In the mean while, the Court of Directors had ordered a state of the writer's case to be drawn up by their solicitor, and laid before Council. As no man can expect a just opinion on any case unless it be fairly and fully stated, the writer proposed to the Company's solicitor to have one drawn up to which all parties might subscribe, as the most candid and equitable method of proceeding in an affair of such consequence. This proposal which, if admitted, might have saved the Company and the writer much trouble, vexation, and expence, was however rejected, and a case produced in which the mere suggestions of his enemies were given as proofs, and almost every fact was wholly misrepresented. In this case, also, the most material circumstances in the writer's favour were industriously suppressed; but particularly his repeated representations of the state of his important mercantile-concerns, and of the time requisite for their effectual liquidation; and also the proceedings of the President and Council in *September* 1768, respecting the bond of indemnity which they had given Captain *Parce's*, for bringing him forcibly a prisoner to *England*.

But notwithstanding all the disadvantages of a case so partially drawn against the writer, the present Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, then *William de Grey*, Esq; the late Right Honourable *Charles Yorke*, appointed Lord Chancellor of *England*, and *Charles Sayer*, Esq; the Company's present Standing Counsel, to whom it was submitted, were all of opinion, that the proceedings against him “had not been *sufficiently regular and cautious*, and that “in case his removal from his corporate-office, as Alderman, “should be held illegal, it was probable he would recover considerable damages, as a person seized and sent home without warrant from the statute, and contrary to law;” as may be more fully seen in the opinions of those learned + gentlemen at large.

The writer was not then in possession of proofs relative to the most criminal parts of the conduct of the President and Council at *Calcutta* towards him; but he nevertheless drew up a short case,

* Appendix F. page 542.

† Ibid. I. Num. VIII. page 622.



containing the principal facts which were at that time within his knowledge, and laid it before learned Counsel, whose * opinions thereon are likewise inserted in the Appendix, together with their answers to various † queries submitted to their judgment, on a further general case.

Many applications were at different times made by the writer, for justice, to the Court of Directors, as inserted at length in the Appendix under the letter H. but they all proved ineffectual; while every letter he received from *India* brought fresh accounts of the losses which he sustained in property, in consequence of his sudden removal, by force, from *Bengal*. The natives, in various parts of the interior country, refused to come to any account with the writer's attornies: while several of them acted as if they thought, that to withhold his property would be a means to obtain favour with the President and Council. Many demands in the common course of business, which would have been liquidated in *India*, were sent over against the writer to *England*, where they could be substantiated with a heavy interest against him; while his only resource was in *India*, where he could obtain no remedy. In the *British* settlements within the jurisdiction of his Majesty's charter, the President and Council, and therefore their dependent Judges in the Mayor's Court, were hostile towards him: and out of the jurisdiction of the charter, the laws of the country were every where subverted, through nominal Nabobs, acting under the immediate direction of the President and Select Committee of *Calcutta*.

From such causes, seeing himself deprived of the greatest part of his fortune, threatened with a prison, and menaced with ruinous and expensive law-suits, the writer first applied to the ‡ Court of Directors, as having become the natural guardians and trustees of that property which he had been compelled to abandon within their assumed government in *India*; requesting them to assist him with as much money as would satisfy present demands, to be repaid out of such of his effects as should come to the hands of their servants there. The Directors § answered, that they did not think themselves authorized to comply with his request: so that he was forced to throw

* See the opinion of *John Glynn, Esq*; Appendix I. Num. IV. page 616.
of *John Dunning, Esq*; *ibid.* Num. V. page 617.
of *Alexander Wedderburn, Esq*; *ibid.* Num. VI.

† Appendix I. Num. VII. page 619.

‡ *Ibid.* H. Num. X. page 585.

§ *Ibid.* Num. XI. page 586.



himself on the mercy of his creditors, who, upon looking into the state of his affairs in *February* 1770, found it necessary to back the former application, in * another request, that the Court would please to send orders to the Commissioners then appointed over all *India*, as well as to their Presidents and Councils, to give every necessary and proper assistance to the writer's agents, for the securing, collecting, and remitting to *England* of his outstanding concerns : in consequence of which application the Directors were pleased to write another short † paragraph in their general letter to *Bengal*.

As soon as advices could be received from the writer's agents in *Bengal*, of their success in the realization of his outstanding effects, he was informed that the first orders sent by the Directors to their servants, by the *Lapwing*, for giving them assistance in recovering and securing his property, had proved ineffectual ; and that as the President and Council of *Calcutta*, on the most groundless pretences, had declined complying with the Directors orders, they had been under the necessity of formally protesting against them. But as a detail of the altercations which passed on this subject, between the servants of the Company and the attornies of the writer in *Bengal*, would be too burthensome for this narration, the reader is referred to the ‡ protest in the Appendix, in which are contained all the letters that were written upon this occasion.

The Court of Directors having been furnished with the opinions of their learned Council on the writer's case, as already mentioned, transmitted the substance of them, with their own sentiments thereon at large, in their general letter of the 23d *March* 1770, to their President and Council in *Bengal*. By this || letter the Directors appeared perfectly sensible, that the whole conduct of their President, Select Committee, and Council, had been intirely illegal, not only with respect to the writer, but likewise towards those *Armenian* merchants who had acted as his agents ; two of whom, in the month of *August* 1769, had arrived in *England*, in quest of justice.

Soon afterwards, the writer's appeal against the judgment of removal from his seat, as a Judge in the Mayor's Court, pronounced by the President and board at *Calcutta*, was brought to a hearing

* See a letter from the writer's creditors, dated the 14th *February* 1770, Appendix II. Num. XII. page 587.

† See the XCVIth paragraph of their letter of the 23d *March* 1770, Ibid. page 557.

‡ See Appendix F. Num. LII. page 541.

|| Ibid. Num. LIII. pages 553 to 558.



before his Majesty in Council, when the Court of Directors being ashamed to appear in the affair, on behalf of their servants, his Majesty was graciously pleased to reverse the judgment passed by the Presidency of *Bengal*, and to restore the appellant to his office. For the arguments used on this extraordinary occasion by the able Counsel employed on behalf of the appellant, and his Majesty's royal award of restoration, dated at *St. James's*, the 15th *June* 1770, we beg leave to refer the reader to the * Appendix.

The Court of Directors knowing the distressed situation of the writer, and that without the assistance which he had applied for in his letter of the 6th *February* 1770, and which they had refused, he could not proceed to *Bengal*; informed him, by a letter of the 28th + *June* 1770, that they expected he would repair to *Calcutta* in one of their ships of the ensuing season, in order to resume the functions of his office. Repeating his representations of distress, the writer thereon ‡ requested the Court would acquiesce in his remaining in *England* for two years from the date of his Majesty's sentence; which they informed || him was not in their power, as it was expressed in the charter of justice, that if any Alderman should be absent from the town of *Calcutta* for twelve calendar months, his office became vacant. Hereupon the writer presented an humble § petition to the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council, under date the 21st *July* 1770, praying, that in consideration of the circumstances of his very hard case, therein set forth, his Majesty would be graciously pleased to interpose by his royal prerogative, and grant the petitioner leave to remain in *England* for the space of two years from the date of his Majesty's judgment of reversal aforesaid; and that the person who served in his office might be permitted to continue so to do, until the petitioner could arrive in *Calcutta* to resume the functions thereof: which petition was referred, by the Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of Council, for the consideration and report of Mr. Attorney and Mr. Solicitor General.

In a letter of the ¶ 9th *August* 1770, the writer acquainted the Court of Directors of the ineffectuality of all the applications for as-

* Appendix I. Num. IX. and Num. X. pages 625 and 626. See also the proceedings of the Mayor's Court of *Calcutta*, the 22d *March* and 3d *April* 1771, in consequence of this judgment, Ibid. Num. XII. page 630.

+ Ibid. Letter H. Num. XIII. page 587.

‡ Ibid. Num. XIV. page 588.

|| Ibid. Num. XV. page 589.

§ Ibid. Letter I. Num. XI. page 627.

¶ Ibid. Letter H. Num. XVI. page 589.



sistance which had been made to the President and Council, by his attornies in *Bengal*, in consequence of the Court's orders by the *Lapwing*. He therein also informed the Court of the great losses he was likely to sustain by such disobedience ; offered to give them every satisfaction that could be required concerning the propriety and legality of his commercial engagements ; and requested such farther orders to their Supervisors and Presidents and Councils, as might, without a possibility of evasion, effectually secure the recovery of his just debts outstanding : the Directors reserving to themselves the determination of any disputes on the points of legality.

But the Court of Directors were as regardless of this representation of the writer's wrongs as they before had been of the many others which he had presented to them. All-powerful as they thought themselves, they paid no attention to his prayers for justice, nor ever offered the most trifling reparation for the numberless injuries which he had suffered. They possessed the judicious opinions of their own eminent Lawyers, to which they themselves had also subscribed, that the proceedings of their governing-servants in *Bengal* against the writer were illegal ; which illegality was put farther beyond a doubt by the decree of his Majesty in Council. But they knew that whatever might be the event, the *never-failing* treasury of the Company would secure them from all losses in their official capacities. They well foresaw, that the investigation before the public, or in courts of justice, of matters of such magnitude as were involved in the writer's case, could not fail of injuring, if not ruining, the Company ;—but the carrying of a few favourite points in a party, and the securing of their annual elections, were objects to be considered far in preference to the interests of the Proprietors ; who appeared to have been long reconciled to be the dupes of *East India* politics.

The Court of Directors, therefore, would never candidly declare whether they vindicated or condemned the conduct of their servants towards the writer ; who, after being kept, in the most humiliating manner, under hopes of redress, for seventeen months, was at last forced to * commence prosecutions at law ; not merely to obtain damages for illegal sufferings, but in fact to regain possession of a fortune lawfully acquired by his own industry, from which he had been first forcibly torn, and then illegally withheld : while President *Verelst*, in the election of *April* 1771, was rewarded, for his *great* and *meritorious* services, with a seat in the Direction.

* The writer commenced his prosecutions against the Company and their servants in *September* 1770.



In consequence of the second order given by the Court of Directors, the writer's attornies in *Bengal* renewed their * applications to the President and Council for their assistance in securing his property and concerns outstanding; but those applications, like the former, were without effect. The board persisted in their † refusal of assistance, under the same pretences as before, which reduced the writer's attornies to the necessity of serving them with another protest under date the 13th *December* 1770, while the recovery of a great part of his property was thereby rendered totally desperate.

His Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General, on the 16th *May* 1771, having ‡ reported upon the writer's petition of the 21st *July* 1770, that they were humbly of opinion, his Majesty could not *legally* comply with the petitioner's request for leave of absence from his office in the Mayor's Court of *Calcutta*; the writer determined on returning to *Bengal*, and accordingly || applied to the Court of Directors for a passage in one of the Company's ships.

The Directors, who knew perfectly well that no other than merchants ever had or could have filled the offices of Mayor and Aldermen at *Calcutta*, and that the whole of the emoluments received by an Alderman did not exceed twenty-five pounds sterling *per annum*, agreed to give directions for his passage to *India* on board the ship *Britannia*; but at the same time informed him, that although he returned to resume the functions of his office, *he would not be § allowed to trade there*, “as, in the opinions of the ablest Lawyers, such office “ carried with it no authority whatsoever to trade, but, on the contrary, was expressly repugnant to several acts of Parliament for “ confirming to the East India Company their exclusive right to trade.”

This was a new doctrine, which had never been started before; nor at this time would have been thought of, if it had not been solely for the purpose of distressing an injured man, made obnoxious by the guilt of others: for the Directors argued, acutely, that he could not reside in *India*, if they debarred him from the means of supporting himself. They likewise, without doubt, thought this was the best method of defeating the justice of their Sovereign in Council, by rendering his solemn decree from the throne ineffectual and impotent; as a restoration to office could not but prove fruitless,

* See Appendix F. Num. LIV. page 558.

† Ibid. Num. LV. page 559.

‡ Ibid. Letter I. Num. XIII. page 632.

|| Ibid. H. Num. XIX. page 592.

§ Ibid. Num. XX. page 593.



if the means of subsisting in it were taken away. In his * answer to the letter from the Directors, the writer therefore expostulated with them freely upon the injustice of their conduct towards him; and requested to be informed, if they pleased to allow him any, and what sum for his passage and expences to *Bengal*: but he was never favoured with an answer.

In the mean time, the preparations he was making for his voyage to *Bengal* alarmed his creditors, who refused to let him depart without first satisfying them for their respective demands on him. Several suits and actions were in consequence commenced against him: and while he was under an arrest in custody of the Sheriff's officers, he again applied, by † letter, to the Court of Directors, requesting they would please to procure bail to the writ upon which he was confined, and also for such other sums as might appear against him. As he had been exposed to these hardships in consequence of the outrages practised on him in *India*, by the servants of the Company, supported by the subsequent orders and proceedings of the Court of Directors, he thought he had a reasonable claim upon them to comply with this request, and more especially as the Company, in their character of Nabob of *Bengal*, were already become possessed of a considerable part of his property. But no application from him could induce the Court of Directors to give him any satisfaction, as the reader will perceive from the many other letters which passed on different occasions: copies of all which are inserted in the Appendix under the letter H.

On the contrary, although conscious that the writer had been illegally removed from his office of Alderman; that he had been brought away by force from *Calcutta*; and that he was, in effect, under a physical impossibility of returning, the Court of Directors informed him, by ‡ letter of the 31st *August* 1771, that, as his said office was become vacant *by his absence*, they had transmitted orders to their Governor and Council in *Bengal* forthwith to proceed to fill up the vacancy in his place and stead. It was scarce possible for an injured and insulted man to bear such repeated acts of injustice with more temper than the writer did; but he could not wholly restrain his indignation on this occasion. The answer which he wrote to this letter from the Directors having given great offence, that the reader may judge of his demerits in this matter, without the trouble of a reference, we here submit the whole letter to his perusal.

* See Appendix H. Num. XXI. page 594.

† Ibid. Num. XXII. page 596.

‡ Ibid. Num. XXVII. page 600.



“ To *Peter Michell, Esq;* Secretary to the Honourable the Court of
 “ Directors for Affairs of the Honourable the United Company
 “ of Merchants of *England* trading to the *East Indies*.

“ S I R,

“ I have received your letter, dated the 31st *August*, written by
 “ order of the Court of Directors of the *East India* Company, ac-
 “ quainting me that they had, on that day, transmitted to *Bengal*
 “ their orders to their Governor and Council forthwith to proceed
 “ to the choice of another Alderman of the Mayor’s Court, in my
 “ place ; which station the Court of Directors, upon the opinion of
 “ eminent Counsel, presume to be vacant.

“ By this action the Public will undoubtedly perceive the great
 “ obligation they owe to the Court of Directors, for the official at-
 “ tention they give to the complete administration of justice in their
 “ settlements abroad, where they will not allow of one vacancy un-
 “ der a physical impossibility, while there are two at their own
 “ * board, of which they take no notice.

“ They will likewise see the dignity of the Court, in acquainting
 “ me with their resolution after the packet which carried it had been
 “ dispatched ; nor can they have any doubt of the propriety of their
 “ conduct, when fortified by the opinion of such eminent Counsel,
 “ who are above any mean subterfuge, and whom all the money
 “ which has been plundered from the *East India* Company and the
 “ miserable inhabitants of *Hindustan*, and all the boroughs which
 “ have been bought thereby, would not tempt to utter a syllable
 “ contrary to law and justice.

“ This will further remove the general reproaches that are daily
 “ uttered against the Court of Directors, and particularly this, that
 “ the whole of their conduct, for seven years back, has been one
 “ uniform system of oppressing the innocent by every ignoble exer-
 “ tion of authority, and protecting the guilty by every artifice of
 “ power. And therefore, seeing they are daily proceeding in such
 “ a meritorious system of reformation as might almost save the Com-
 “ pany, if it were on the brink of bankruptcy, it is to be hoped that
 “ no daring spirit will presume to call the legality of any act, under
 “ their present situation, in question, merely because they consist

* There were two seats in the Direction then vacant by the deaths of Mr. *Cruttenden* and Mr. *Rous*.



“ of only twenty-two members, when that number can be proved,
 “ by eminent Counsel, to be superior to twenty-four; much less
 “ to dispute the very principle of what they may perform from such
 “ fair and upright intentions.

“ Nevertheless, under all those prejudices on behalf of so wise, so
 “ honourable, and so impartial a board, I am assured, by persons who
 “ pretend to be equally eminent in the Law, that the Court of Di-
 “ rectors and their Counsel will have as little to say in favour of this
 “ proceeding, when it comes to be discussed, as the eloquent Mr.
 “ *Sayer*, and the ingenious Mr. *Nutball*, after all the money they
 “ had received, had to offer in favour of their former Governor, and
 “ present associate, Mr. *Verelst*, for removing me from my judicial
 “ office at first.

“ I freely acknowledge, that *William Bolts*, persecuted, impris-
 “ oned, banished, transported, and plundered, in the decay of the
 “ *English* constitution, is a very unequal match for the Directors of
 “ the *East India* Company, stimulated by an army of Nabobs, rob-
 “ bers, and tyrants, whose riches are capable of even shaking the
 “ Senate, and much more of calling forth the cunning contrivance
 “ of a venal profession. At the same time I am still hardy enough
 “ to believe I shall obtain the victory at last, notwithstanding the
 “ dreams and spells of * *Ismeno*; from this old proverb, which I
 “ learned in my youth, “ that truth and innocence, with proper
 “ fortitude, will in the end prevail against a host of foes.”

I am, S I R,

Inglefield Green,
the 7th September 1771.

Your most obedient servant,
 (Signed) WILLIAM BOLTS.”

About this time a most vexatious prosecution was also commenced against the writer, by an information filed against him in the Exchequer, by his Majesty's Attorney General, at the relation of the *East India* Company.

To give the candid reader a clear idea of the origin of the transaction on which this prosecution was grounded, it may be necessary to inform him, that after assuming the sovereignty of *Bengal*, disguised by the office of Dewannee, pretended to be held of *Shah Alom*, the Grand Mogul, under the tool of a Mock-Nabob, in 1765 the President and Secret Committee of *Calcutta* had so raised the expectations of the *East India* Directors, that they soon began to entertain the most ex-

* Alluding to a character in *Taj's Jerusalem*.



travellers' ideas of ceaseless floods of wealth streaming into the Company's treasury from the *inexhaustible* sources of that country. In consequence of such ideas, the Directors, in *May* 1766, positively * prohibited their President and Council from drawing bills on them for any sums paid by individuals into their cash at *Calcutta*; and in *January* 1768, they ordered the remittance home of five † hundred thousand pounds sterling, in specie. The Company's cash was the usual channel whereby persons dependent on them were permitted to remit their property to *Europe*; and indeed, at the time described, it was the only method in their power, as diamonds could not be procured in *Bengal*; the President and Council, as hath already been shewn, having publicly prohibited, under severe penalties, and reserved to themselves all intercourse with the adjacent provinces, in which only they were obtainable to advantage.

When the writer was seized, in *September* 1768, almost the whole of his fortune, besides considerable property belonging to other persons then under his care, was in the power of the Company and their servants in *India*. Without any means in his power for securing those effects from which he had been thus torn by violence, they were of course left in imminent peril from the guilt of his oppressors; who could not but foresee that their own future safety must greatly depend on his immediate and effectual ruin. In this state of things, soon after his forcible expulsion from *Bengal*, a foreigner undertook to collect various effects belonging to the writer, and ship them, on freight, in a *Portuguese* ship bound to *Lisbon*; which he accordingly afterwards effected.

This was the transaction on which was grounded the information in the Exchequer, requiring an account from the writer of such pretended-unlawful trade, with the forfeiture thereon of thirty *per cent.* to be paid to the Company, Mr. Attorney General waving all other penalties and forfeitures. But this extraordinary prosecution was carried still farther; for, on the new-broached doctrine, of extending their exclusive right of trading TO AND FROM *India*, to the ridiculous claim of right to all trade IN *India*, the honourable Directors, on behalf of the Company, *conscientiously* demanded the whole profits of the writer's industry, acquired by trade of any sort, in *Bengal*, from the day on which he resigned the Company's commercial service, in *November* 1766, until his final imprisonment and transportation: of

* See Appendix A. Num. XVIII. page 122.

† Ibid. Num. XXXIV. page 172.

which



which profits the Attorney General's information also demanded an account on oath.

It was not repugnant to the honour or dignity of the Court of *East India* Directors to fix upon the writer, whom they had already almost ruined, as the man on whom to make this new species of demand; nor to select him for this truly inquisitorial prosecution, from among a great number of other persons, residents under *British* protection in *India*, who they knew had been reduced to the same necessity of remitting their estates from thence through other nations, without the arguments in their favour, which the writer possessed on this transaction, as being the act of others, after he had been forcibly torn from his property, and sent out of the country: nor was it deemed dishonourable by those gentlemen then in the Direction (1771) who had themselves been actually guilty of illicit traffic between *India* and *Europe*, without any plea of necessity, but merely for the gratification of their love of wealth.

In hopes of quashing an expensive prosecution of so frivolous, partial, and vexatious a nature, the writer, whose father was a *German*, and himself not a natural-born subject of his Majesty, pleaded his alienage in bar to the discovery and relief sought. In the situation described, he did not think it dishonourable to avail himself of any plea which accident had thrown in his way, which the law allowed of, and which many gentlemen of the greatest eminence for their knowledge in the law of *Great Britain* still think a good one; but particularly with respect to the *East India* Company, whose protection, as the reader has seen, had been formally withdrawn from him, and whose Directors and other superior servants had exerted every act of injustice and oppression to effect his ruin both in fortune and reputation.

But when this plea was argued before the Honourable Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, they were pleased to order that it should be over-ruled; and from that judgment the writer appealed to the Right Honourable the House of Lords, before whom it came on to be heard in *May* 1773. It was there alleged by the respondents, that "if those who have been in the service of the Company, being aliens, might lawfully carry *East India* commodities from the Company's settlements to the ports of foreign kingdoms, it would virtually put an end to the charter of the *East India* Company, and all the acts of Parliament made for securing that trade to *Great Britain*."—But it was not considered, if the *English East India* Company might lawfully seize any subject within the *British* settlements



CONSIDERATIONS ON

in *India*;—send him a prisoner to *England*, whenever it is convenient;—put a stop to all remittances, through them, of private property from *India*; and at the same time by writs of Star-chamber-informations in his Majesty's Court of Exchequer prosecute for, and recover as forfeited to themselves in the charters of subjects and merchants, all property which such person might receive from *India* in any other channel, while they acted as despotic sovereigns in that country; that in such case the Company would *virtually* become the possessors of all the property of such subject.

Nevertheless, such were the consequences to the writer of what he had already suffered, with respect to a great part of the property from which he had been torn in *India*, while the Directors for the Company were attempting, by their Exchequer-information, to disturb his possession of such part thereof as his foreign agent had rescued from their power, and brought to *Lisbon*, for the benefit of his creditors. Under such unconstitutional privileges and powers as those which the Company are hereby contending for, most of the *British* subjects in *India* will soon find it for their interest, as well as personal safety, to renounce their country, and give up the name of *Englishmen*, to seek protection among foreign *Europeans*, or the independent princes in *Asia*: which may soon effect the dissolution of the *British* trade and empire in *India*.

It was also urged in the writer's behalf, before the Lords, “that
 “legiance being *reciprocum ligamen*, if protection were withdrawn
 “from an inhabitant, and he forcibly banished, the duty of legiance
 “ceased;—that therefore the appellant was released from the tem-
 “porary allegiance which he owed to the crown of *Great Britain*,
 “when deprived of protection, and forcibly brought a prisoner upon
 “the high seas. Farther, that as the act of the 7th of *George* the
 “First, which enables the respondents to recover thirty *per cent.* of
 “the value in *England* of all goods which are the subject of the trade
 “therein prohibited, was a statute highly penal, it ought to be con-
 “strued strictly:—that in such case, being confined to his Majesty's
 “*natural-born* subjects, it could not be extended so as to comprehend
 “the appellant, who, although an alien, yet being a protestant,
 “and the subject of a state at amity with *Great Britain*, was an
 “Alderman of *Calcutta* agreeably to the charter; and who, in fact,
 “at the time when his effects were embarked in *India* by a foreign
 “agent, was not resident in any part of his Majesty's dominions,
 “nor had any connexions with the respondents.”

But



But it was insisted on behalf of the respondents, “that the appellant’s plea was defective in point of formality.”—Mr. Attorney General said, “it did not contain a legal averment *who his parents were*, but only a declaration, *as he believed*, which would not do.” And Mr. *Skinner*, likewise of counsel for the respondents, said, “it was not sufficient to declare the appellant was born out of the allegiance of his Majesty, but the place of his birth should have been precisely mentioned.”

It would be difficult to reconcile such language to the understanding of a plain and unlettered man, unacquainted with law, and the nice distinctions subsisting between the formality of a special plea and common sense. But those *legal* objections to the plea, which was actually so *defectively* worded, could not be surmounted; and the Right Honourable the House of Lords were pleased, without a debate, to confirm the judgment given by the Honourable Barons, whereby the appellant was referred back to the Court of Exchequer, for the decision of his cause, upon it’s merits.

During the course of these transactions in *England*, the subterfuges of the President and Council in *Bengal*, not improbably prompted by some of the Directors at home, had rendered it necessary to the writer’s creditors, for the security of their property, to renew their applications for assistance in collecting in his effects in *India*, and remitting them to *Europe*. But the Court of Directors now not only excused but even commended their President and Council for their disobedience of their former orders. The grand basis on which they founded their quibbles was, that the debts outstanding in *India* had arisen on an illegal trade; and the various grounds they took to prove this pretended illegality were, that they had been contracted in the salt-trade; or in trade carried on by the writer after he had resigned the Company’s service; or without licence; or after repeated prohibitions to the contrary.—In vain had the writer’s attornies in *Bengal* undertaken to prove before the President and Council, that his outstanding debts were not in such predicaments, and in vain did his creditors undertake to prove before the Directors in *London*, that there was no foundation for any of those suppositions. The Honourable Court of Directors then urged, that a suit was depending in his Majesty’s Court of Exchequer, wherein one of the great points for decision was, the power assumed by the writer, *of trading* after having quitted the Company’s service, and after receiving orders from their President and Council to desist from trade. But still taking for granted that he had so traded, and that
such



such trade was illegal, they begged leave to ask, “whether it would not be a downright solecism in practice to prosecute a man for the recovery of penalties incurred by an unlawful trade, and at the same time to be aiding and assisting to him in the recovery of debts contracted in such trade?” And they concluded their discussion of the point, by offering to give positive orders to their President and Council at *Calcutta*, that “*their utmost efforts should be used to obtain the recovery of such debts and demands as that Presidency should not be possessed of full evidence to shew the illegality of.*”

The candid reader may see in the * Appendix, at length, all the letters which passed on this occasion. It was to no purpose to argue with men armed with unlimited power, and hostile towards reason and conviction. The writer saw himself effectually debarred from recovering his property in the interior parts of *Bengal*, where the Directors and their servants, acting for a society of merchants, without openly avowing it, had taken upon themselves the sovereignty of the country, subverted the ancient laws and customs, and under the cloaks of pretended Nabobs, directed by their Resident at the *Durbar*, and their Chiefs at Subordinates, trampled without controul on justice and the rights of mankind.

We will no longer trespass on the patience of the indulgent reader by a minute detail of the farther circumstances of this case. Suffice it to say, that after combating every species of injustice, chicanery, and villainy, both in *India* and in *England*, for upwards of seven years, single and unsupported, although intitled to a fortune of upwards of ninety thousand pounds sterling, when forced away from *Bengal*, the writer saw himself frequently arrested and imprisoned for debt, his houses sequestered, his effects seized and publicly sold by writs of execution: and under all the horrors of such circumstances to himself and family, he was at last, in *October* 1773, reduced to the necessity of becoming a bankrupt, without the guilt of any extravagance or misconduct, but without hope of any kind of justice to himself. Can he then be thought to owe the least forbearance to his oppressors? And has he not just cause to lament, that there is no coercive power in this kingdom adequate to the punishment of the perpetrators of such crimes as are without parallel; and whose security therein has been owing to such *deceptions* and *concealments* as should be deemed no other than CONSTITUTIONAL TREASONS?



CHAP. VI.

AN ACCOUNT of the ARMENIANS in BENGAL, particularly of the OPPRESSIONS suffered in the Year 1768, from the SUPERIOR SERVANTS of the EAST INDIA COMPANY, by GREGORE COJAMAU, JOHANNES PADRE RAFAEL, and others; and of their Success in pursuit of Justice.

THE interior regions and maritime coasts of *Hindustan* had afforded shelter and emolument to peaceable merchants, from all *Asia* and oriental *Africa*, for many ages before western intruders disturbed their repose. Defenceless against the military arts and naval armaments of *Europeans*, the *Indian* coasts, therefore, opened, upon the first adventurers, prospects equally extensive for trade or plunder. But although the latter was, for some time, in a great measure, restrained by the establishment of those national *East India* Companies in *Europe*, which, under many vicissitudes, have subsisted to the present times, with their respective rights of trading round the *Cape of Good Hope*; yet the success of those Companies, in the degrees they have departed from their commercial systems, seems only to have proportionally converted their right of exclusively trading with, to that of exclusively oppressing or plundering the natives of *Asia*.

Among the many nations that partook of the trade in *India*, the *Armenians* were not the least conspicuous. From the earliest period of the history of that country they were the principal traders from and to the gulphs of *Persia* and *Arabia*; by which last track, in particular, the eastern commodities were transported to *Egypt*, *Turkey*, and the coasts of the *Mediterranean* sea.

The extensiveness of this trade was soon found to be obstructive of the views of the adventurers newly come round the *Cape of Good Hope*. But what the *Portuguese* attempted by open violence, at the mouths of the two gulphs, the *English East India* Company accomplished by stratagem.

In the year 1688, a treaty or agreement was concluded by the old *East India* Company with Cogee Phanoos Calendar, an *Armenian* merchant of eminency, on behalf of the *Armenian* nation; "calcu-



C O N S I D E R A T I O N S O N

to divert their trade from its old channels, into the new one to the *Cape*. To this * treaty the *Armenians* were allured by precious prospects of great benefits. They were respectively to have, then and at all times thereafter, an equal share of all advantages granted by the Company to any of their own adventurers or other *English* merchants whomsoever, with respect to trade, or otherwise, within the limits of the Company's charter. Great privileges were likewise allowed them for conveying their persons or merchandize to or from *Europe* in the Company's ships. They were, moreover, freely to reside in all the Company's towns or garrisons; where they were declared to be capable of holding all civil offices and employments, equally with the natives of *England*. They were allowed too, the free exercise of their religion; and whenever forty, or more of them, became inhabitants of any of the Company's towns or garrisons, they were to have ground given to them for a church, to be first built at the expence of the Company; who further stipulated, that they would not continue in their service any Governor who should in any way disturb or discountenance them in the full enjoyment of their trade and privileges.

Of such consequence were the *Armenians* thought in *India*, and in particular, by the *English East India* Company, no longer than eighty-nx years ago. Under this treaty great numbers resorted to the Company's settlements; where they established themselves, traded, and had churches built. Being the best merchants in *Asia*, they principally contributed to the increase of trade and population in the respective settlements where they resided. They were of the greatest service to the Company's agents and factors, as well in the disposal of their outward, as in the provision of their homeward-bound-cargoes: and it was to an *Armenian* the Company were most particularly indebted, in the year 1717, for the acquisition of the grand Firmauns of the Emperor *Furrukhsheer*, for *Bengal*, *Madras*, and *Surat*. This may be clearly seen, as well from the Firmauns themselves, as from the orders of the Grand Vizier, and by the letters from the *Armenian* merchant, *Cogee Serbaud*, one of the deputies then at *Dehly*, † to the Company's President and Council at *Fort William*.

The reader need not be here further informed, that the privileges granted by the Emperor in those Firmauns, in prejudice of

* See a copy of this treaty in the Appendix, A. Num. I.

† See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. pages 850 to 859.



his own native subjects, laid the foundation of all the Company's future prosperity, as a commercial body; and that what was originally a gracious indulgence for trading duty-free, in the dominions of the Great Mogul and his dependent Nabobs, afterwards furnished the means to the Company and their servants, first of securing the independency of such Nabobs against their Sovereign, and, in the end, of dispossessing even them of their dominions.

The Company's trade and power, however, were no sooner established on a prosperous footing, than the *Armenians*, who had principally contributed thereto, were the first that were made to feel a reverse of fortune. Such impediments were thrown in the way of their inland-trade and external commerce, at the three principal settlements of the Company, but particularly in their trade to *Mocha*, *Judda*, and *Busforah*, that they were in a manner precluded therefrom altogether; unless they chose to submit to the grossest impositions, in sending their goods for those markets on the private trading ships equipped by the servants of the Company; as hath been more fully made appear in * the first part of this work.

But the oppressions which the *Armenians* met with were not merely confined to trade. In latter times, every avenue to justice was shut against them in *Bengal*. During the government of Lord *Clive*, their residence in *Calcutta* was deemed taking refuge from the country-government, although the law of that very government was then no other than the will of the noble President. They were rescued from the Sheriff's custody, deprived of their right, by charter, of appealing to the laws of *England*, and by military force banished from a *British* settlement, for having brought their own respective causes before a *British* Court of † Justice.

During

* *Considerations on India Affairs*, Part I. chap. XIV.

† “At a Consultation, held at *Calcutta* the 3d March 1766,
Present, The Right Honourable Lord *Clive*, President,
General *Carnar*,
Harry Verelst,
Francis Sykes,
Randolph Marriott,
Hugh Watts,
Claud Russell,
William Aldersey,
Thomas Kelsall, and
Charles Esloyer, Esquires.

It appearing from undoubted authority, that one *Cogee Meckil*, an *Armenian*, has filed in the Mayor's Court, a fictitious suit against *Johanna Marcat*, an *Armenian* widow,
merely



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During Mr. Verelst's government, the *Armenians* not only continued to be deprived of their trade within the provinces of *Bengal*, *Babar*, and *Orissa*, but, as hath been shewn in the preceding third chapter, they were even publicly prohibited from trading, or residing, *beyond, or without those provinces*; under the severest penalties of corporal punishment and confiscation of property. The President represented the residence or establishment of *Armenians* at *Murshedabad* and in the province of *Owd*, as a modern affair commencing with the Nabobship of * *Cossim Ally Khawn*; although their nation had been settled residents and merchants there and all over *Hindustan*, not only before the establishment of any *English East India Company*, but long before the existence of the *Mogul Empire* in *India*.

It is true, that the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn* had, during his short government, several *Armenian* Generals and others of that nation, as servants, at his *Durbár*, or Court; as many Nabobs in *India* had had before him. But the misfortune of the *Armenians* in *Bengal* was, that one of their nation, *Cogee Petrusse*, was the chief instrument employed, underhand, in bringing about the revolution which placed that Nabob on the *Musnud*. Mr. *Vansittart's* opponents, who had not been let into the secret, alleged, that "the *Armenians* were spies; they were the Nabob's advisers; they managed him; they urged the disputes, or they wanted to extirpate the *English*, to get their commerce to themselves."

Such general and vague accusations, which have also been repeated lately in the *British House of Commons*, evidently owed their origination to the private interests or views of parties. If, owing no allegiance to the *British* crown, and independent of the *English East India Company*, some of those *Asiatics* served the Nabob

merely with a view to evade the demands of the country government, with which she has large accounts, and has therefore taken refuge here without our knowledge; and as nothing is so difficult as to investigate collusion of parties, to the satisfaction of law, as the Court may not have the power of redress, though convinced of the fact:

Agreed, therefore, to put a stop to practices so prejudicial to the Company's affairs (as they must necessarily interfere with the revenues) that the board interpose their authority, as President and Council, and withdraw the Company's protection from both parties, turning the complainant immediately out of the settlement, and the defendant as soon as she may be regularly released from the *Sheriff's* custody." See Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 933.

* See Appendix, E. page 352.

with



with fidelity, they could not be blamed for doing their duty, whether amicably or hostilely employed. But in any case, it would not be less illiberal to condemn all, for the consequences of the actions of a few, than it would be unjust for the natives of *India* to curse the whole nation, because one *Armenian* principally contributed to obtain the Mogul Emperor's Firmauns for the *Dutch* Company; or to revile the whole *British* nation, because some individuals have been guilty of crimes in *India*, which no justice is likely to reach in this world, except it come from the immediate hand of God.

We have already shewn, by a general letter from the Directors to their servants at *Fort William*, dated the * 26th of *February* 1752, that the then United Company strenuously claimed, as their right, all the privileges and advantages, before obtained by the old, to be fully enjoyed by the new one, as “*the English national Company, justly intitled to those privileges.*” But when it became the object of consideration, how far this United Company were bound by the engagements of the old one, the scales of justice were then balanced according to the system of interest adopted by modern Directors.—When the treaty between the old Company and the *Armenians* was first demanded to be produced before a Committee of the Honourable House of Commons, in *May* 1772, its existence was denied.—After repeated applications from an honourable member, backed by an order of the Committee, it was at last reluctantly brought forth by the Court of Directors, who then had recourse to their learned Solicitor and Standing Counsel; by whom it was determined, + that the old Company's charter and all their powers having been *surrendered*, the present *East India* Company, who derive their rights under a different charter, was not concluded by the agreement of the old Company, “*nor was there any act of parliament, or charter, that warranted any such position.*”

The foregoing facts will abundantly suffice to give the candid reader a competent idea of the conduct of the Company, and their servants, towards the *Armenians* in general. They have constantly received different characters and different treatment from different parties, as the minds of their respective leaders have been more or less interested, liberal, or prejudiced. But if the writer might presume to give an opinion on this subject, after as much intercourse

* Page 5.

+ Appendix, A. Num. LV. page 27.



and acquaintance with them, as perhaps any servant of the *English* Company ever had, he would venture to pronounce the *Armenians* in *India* to be a sober, industrious, honest, and peaceable set of merchants, from whom the Company might have continued to reap the greatest advantages, if their abilities, as the best practical merchants there, had not interfered with the self-interested views of the Company's chief servants, and thereby excited their jealousy and resentment.

With respect to the *Armenians*, *Gregore Cojamaul*, *Johannes Padre Rafael*, *Melcomb Philip*, and *Wuscan Estephan*, who were caused to be suddenly seized, and ignominiously confined for several months by Governor *Verelst* and the Select Committee of *Bengal*, unaccused and unheard; various were the pleas that were afterwards urged in attempting to justify such illegal and cruel imprisonments; as may be seen at large by the documents * already referred to in the Appendix, under the Letter E.

Among other frivolous pretences, it was alleged, that they *were of a tribe of a bad cast*;—that they acted as agents or *gomastabs* for *William Bolts* in carrying on his trade;—and that the trade which *Bolts* carried on through their means was illegal and detrimental to the Company.

If the descendants of ancient families of eminent merchants, honourably prosecuting trade by the laborious exertions of industry, merit such reproach; under what TRIBE OR CAST shall we rank their accusers? But it is not less inconceivable, how it could be criminal for those gentlemen to act as agents for the writer, in a country where there was no law or prohibition to the contrary, than it would be difficult to conceive, how such a prohibition could have been founded on the usages of *Hindostan*, the laws of nature, or of nations, of God, or of man. Where they resided, they were established as merchants, like many other *Armenians*, trading on their own bottoms; and while they were transacting their own affairs, it could not be criminal in them to transact whatever business they chose, on commission, for other persons; subject to, and in conformity with the laws and usages of the country.

The trade which they had carried on for account of the writer, in the provinces of *Owd* and *Illahabad*, was so carried on with the entire consent, approbation, and *perwânabs* of the Princes of the country, to whom he paid the duties they required. So far it was

* See particularly Num. XCII. page 423 of the Appendix.



surely legal; and if in any other respect it could be proved illegal, the parties thereby injured, if any such existed, had their legal recourse for redress. Enough hath already been said in pages 41 and 42 of the nature of the writer's trade in those provinces, to prove it to have been extremely beneficial to the community; and if it be necessary to adduce any further proofs in support of this position, we have not only the evidence of the * Resident at the *Durbar*, but even of the Court of *East India* Directors + themselves, to shew that the trade so carried on with *Sujah al Dowlah's* dominions was deemed highly beneficial to the Company, and to their subjugated provinces in *Bengal*.

The Governor and Council, aware of the imbecility of such charges, thought it safest to stand upon their political ground, and therefore, as guardians of the Company's possessions, they boldly asserted, that these *Armenians were discovered* in carrying on intrigues at the Court of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, of the most dangerous tendency to government, at a crisis when that Nabob's actions afforded them the greatest reason for mistrust.

Notwithstanding such bold assertions, and that six years have elapsed since the imprisonment of the unhappy *Armenians*, those gentlemen have never offered to give one instance of any of the intrigues which they *had discovered* them to have carried on at the Nabob's Court.—Had there been the smallest foundation in truth for such a charge, the writer would have been the last man to stand forth their advocate. But the truth is, that two of those who were imprisoned under such pretences, had then never been within one hundred miles of any such Court.—And with respect to the apprehensions which the President and Council affect to have entertained of *Sujah al Dowlah's* hostile conduct, at the time when the *Armenians* were seized and expelled his country, they appear stamp'd with the infamy of falsehood from their own † records.

But although it hath been fully proved, in the third chapter, that these imprisonments were not the optional acts of the *Indian* Princes themselves, as asserted by the President and Council of *Bengal*, in their letter to the Directors already cited, it will not be improper, in this place, briefly to consider the *august* and *indepen-*

* Appendix Num. LXV. page 397.

† Ibid. Num. XCIII. page 424.

‡ Ibid. E. Num. XVIII. page 363, and A. Num. XL. page 195.



dent situations in which those Princes stood with respect to the Company and their servants, at the time of those cruel transactions.

In the year 1768, the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, who, only three years before, had been conquered; whose dominions had been divided; who had surrendered himself as a prisoner; and who had been restored to only a part of his country, by the servants of the Company, while they kept an army near him, more formidable than that with which Col. *Munro* beat him at *Buxar*, on the 23d Oct 1764, when in the meridian of his glory, and joined by *Cossim Ally Khan*; was not certainly in such an independent situation as to dare to resist any order or request, in which the President of *Calcutta* had really shewn himself serious, for the imprisonment or expulsion of any unprotected merchants within those provinces of which he might so easily have been dispossessed by the government of *Calcutta*. Much less could it, with truth, be alleged that *Bulwantsing*, his tributary Rajah, whose Zemindary had been first taken for the Company; then restored, and his possession, under a fixed annual revenue, guaranteed to him by their servants, was in a state of independence at period.—The style of Mr. *Verelst*'s letters * to him, and the manner in which the Vakeel met with † at *Calcutta*, fully expose the ridiculous pretence.

The Nabobs through whom the prisoners were afterwards restored to the provinces of *Bahar* and *Bengal*, their high situation, will appear from the consideration of the following facts, collected by the records of the Company.

In July 1765, the Nabob of *Bengal*, in consideration of an annual pension, agreed with ‡ Mr. *Francis Sykes* to throw all the affairs of government into the hands of such persons as should be appointed by the President and Select Committee, at *Calcutta*; among whom, Mr. *Sykes*, their Resident at the *Durbar*, was the chief. In their proceedings § of the 18th September 1765, the Committee acknowledged, that the Company were come into the place of the country-government; and on the 3d September 1766, they further threw off the disguise, by declaring, || that they were become the Sovereigns

* Appendix E. Num. XVI. page 361. Num. LXXVII. page 408. and Num. LXXXVI. page 417.

† Ibid. page 415.

‡ See Mr. *Sykes*'s letter of the 28th July 1765 to the Select Committee. *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. Appendix, page 136.

§ Present, Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Summer*, General *Carnac*, Mr. *Verelst*, and Mr. *Sykes*.

|| At a Committee, present, Lord *Clive*, General *Carnac*, and Mr. *Verelst*.



in *India*. At their meeting of the * 31st *December* 1766, they actually regulated the salaries that were to be received by *Mahommed Reza Khawn* at *Murshedabad*, the *Rajah Shetabroy* at *Patna*, and other GREAT MINISTERS; to whom, although it was acknowledged that nothing remained but the name and shadow of authority, yet the Committee resolved † that it was necessary they should *seem to venerate that name and that shadow*: in consequence of which plan, Mr. *Sykes* was directed by the ‡ Committee, never to make the Company appear as principals in any act of government.

In further support of this system, on quitting the chair of *Bengal*, President *Verelst* also strenuously recommended it to the Secret Committee to pursue || “*a delicate conduct in scrupulously observing every form that could indicate apparent dependance,*” upon these Nabobs and Ministers. And indeed, this system was so *scrupulously* pursued that the Court of Directors, tired of the iniquities that were practised under so convenient a disguise, although they had at first § approved of the system, out of their great veneration for the authority which established it, were at last induced to dismiss ¶ the GREAT *Mahommed Reza Khawn* himself, who, in consequence of their orders, was brought down as a prisoner to *Calcutta*, to render an account of HIS MAL-ADMINISTRATION.

From these facts, it appears, incontrovertibly, that since the year 1765, the Nabobs of *Bengal* and *Babar* have been, as they still continue, no other than the mere Collectors of the Revenues under the Company's ruling Servants, and the convenient cloaks for any iniquity they choose to practise. By the proceedings of the bench of *Calcutta* Justices, on the 8th *September* 1766, it hath been already ** shewn, that Governor *Verelst* and his Council, who were the only Justices there, had unanimously declared themselves to be not amenable to the *British* Courts of Justice in *India*, for any oppressions there committed. We have also shewn, that they paid no attention to the applications repeatedly made to them on behalf of those *Armenians*; but, on the contrary, that they had published an edict which effec-

* Present, Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Verelst*, General *Carnac*, and Mr. *Sykes*.

† Proceedings of the Committee upon Lord *Clive*'s letter of the 16th *January* 1767.

‡ See Appendix A. Num. XXXII. page 168.

|| In his minute of the 15th *December* 1769. See also his farewell-letter on this subject, Appendix A. Num. XLIV. page 212.

§ Ibid. Num. XXXI. page 166.

¶ Ibid. page 264.

** Appendix A. Num. XX. page 126.



tually prevented them from securing their effects, or * returning to their habitations, families, and business. In such circumstances, there was consequently no prospect of redress or satisfaction, but from the laws in *Great Britain*.

Deprived of all hopes of ever recovering their property, and encouraged by the fame of the most equitable laws on earth, two of those *Armenians*, *Cogee Gregore Cojamaul* and *Cogee Johannes Padre Rafael*, therefore, resolved to come to *England*. Had their resolutions been known before they embarked, they were apprehensive they might again have been turned over to the tool of a Nabob for obstruction in their design. On this account, they privately procured their passages in a *Dutch* ship; left *Calcutta* in *January* 1769, and embarked for *England* in quest of justice: while the other two sent their powers of attorney for the same purpose.

With these facts before him, can the impartial reader restrain his indignation, when he reads the following words, used by Mr. *Verelst*, on these subjects? “ Instead of *punishing Cogee Gregore and Johannes Padre Rafael*, as they *deserved*, such was the *idle lenity* of our government, that they *immediately* received their liberty, and every assistance was offered to collect their effects; an assistance probably unnecessary, as they *chose* to depart for *Europe*.” †

These *Armenian* merchants, who, in their expedition from *India*, had no worldly dependance, but on the famed humanity and justice of the *British* nation, and the perfection of their laws, arrived in *England* in the month of *August* 1769; and on the 12th *September* following presented an humble ‡ petition to the Court of *East India* Directors: who did not think proper to give them any satisfaction thereupon, although they were so convinced of the injustice that had been done to them, as afterwards to || blame their Governor and Council for *not having accommodated the affair in Bengal*.

Unable to obtain from the Directors even so much as an answer to their petition, after patiently waiting the arrival of their oppressors from *Asia*, in the month of *November* 1770, they brought their actions for damages, in the Court of Common Pleas, against Go-

* Appendix E. Num. LXX. page 403. See also the affidavit of *Gabriel Johannes*, *ibid.* page 409, and an extract of a letter from the same person, relative to a second imprisonment of *Cogee Wuscan Estephan*, by Captain *Gabriel Harper*, *ibid.* Number XC. page 422.

† *Verelst's* View, page 41.

‡ Appendix E. Num. LXXXIX. page 419.

|| *Ibid.* Num. XCI. page 422.



vernor *Vereist* and General *Smith*, who pleaded the general issue, "NOT GUILTY."

But before those actions could be brought to a determination, the affairs of the *East India* Company appeared likely to become an object of parliamentary inquiry. Seeing the very little attention that was paid to their complaints, by the Court of *East India* Directors, who, by every ungenerous exertion of power and artifice, supported the tyranny of their servants, the *Armenian* merchants had the greatest reason to apprehend, in the then situation of the Company's government, that when they returned to *India*, their persons, property, and families, as well as those of the rest of their nation, would be exposed to greater dangers and hardships than they had already experienced, from their having applied for justice in *England*. *Cojamaul*, therefore, on the 28th *February* 1772, presented, on behalf of himself and others, * a petition to the Honourable the Commons of *Great Britain* in Parliament assembled; in which he prayed them to take the case into consideration, and grant such relief, with respect to the future security of persons and property in *Bengal*, as might seem meet to the wisdom of their Honourable House.

This petition was ordered to lie on the table, in the usual form, and a Committee of the House, consisting of † thirty-one members, being on the 16th of *April* 1772 chosen by ballot, "to inquire into" "the nature, state, and condition of the *East India* Company and of" "the *British* affairs in the *East Indies*," it was, on a subsequent day, ordered to be referred to their consideration.

On presenting this petition to Parliament, he had been informed, that the Court of *East India* Directors, having officially transmitted his memorial of the 12th of *September* 1769, to their President and Council at *Bengal*, had received from them a full and explicit answer, with specific charges against him. Presuming, therefore, that the Directors were equally inclined to blame their servants, when culpable, as to defend them, when innocent; and that the protection of the inhabitants of *Bengal* was a principal object in their view, *Cojamaul* humbly ‡ requested the Court would be pleased to furnish him with copies of such charges. But the evasion, and even falsity of the || answer which was transmitted to him on this occasion, will long remain an indelible stain of reproach on that Court. Still supporting

* Appendix E. Num. XCIV. page 425.

† Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. page 703.

‡ Appendix E. Num. XCV. page 426.

|| Ibid. Num. XCVI. page 427.



the iniquitous proceedings of their President and Council of *Bengal*, and involving the *Armenian* merchants in questions, which, though we should admit they might possibly subsist between the Company and the writer, were such as those gentlemen could have no concern with; it appeared, as if being the agent, or the friend of *William Bolts*, was deemed a sufficient reason, in the eyes of the Honourable Court of Directors, for the oppression or ruin of any man whomsoever.

Every thing alleged in Mr. *Cojamaul's* petition to the House of Commons was fully proved before the Committee; who, having examined into its merits, on account of the lateness of the season, and the importance of the subject, begged leave to lay before the House, as their * report, the whole of the evidence, as it stood on their proceedings; which was likewise formally ordered to lie on the table.

It is not improbable that the little attention paid to this petition and report, which were left upon the table, was owing to the prejudices that had been industriously propagated by the *East India* gentlemen and their connexions; that those *Armenian* merchants were the agents, *agents*, of *William Bolts*, in the lowest sense of the word, and that their complaints proceeded wholly from faction. *Company*, as principally interested, having been particularly described in the "VIEW," to impress such an idea on the minds of the public in order to divert their attention from his oppression of the *Armenian* merchants; hath rendered it necessary, that the reader should be perfectly acquainted with the meaning of the word *gomastah*.

In *Bengal*, and particularly among the *English*, the word *gomastah* is confined, in a partial sense, to those *Hindoes* who are sent by the Company's servants into the inland-country, furnished with *dusticks*, to buy or sell goods, on stipulated monthly wages; without drawing commission, or having the liberty to trade on their own account. But among the natives of *Hindustan*, in the more general acceptation, the word *gomastah* is indiscriminately used for every sort of representative, or agent; from the ambassador down to the merchant's clerk, or even the foreman of a manufactory. Thus, in the *Firmauns* granted to the Company by the Emperor at *Dehly*, even the *English* deputies, who were sent from *Calcutta* on that occasion, are described by the appellation of † *gomastahs of the English Company*.

* Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. pages 914 to 944.

† Ibid. page 856.



Mr. *Verelst*, triumphantly exulting in his own imposition on the Public, has, on this occasion the following words : * “ It is also
 “ worthy notice, that one of Mr. *Hare*’s agents at this time, in
 “ *Bulwantsing*’s country, was the very *Armenian* (*Cogee Gregore*) that
 “ Mr. *Bolts* also employed, and has *since instigated* to come to *England*,
 “ to support, with others, his own prosecutions, by a *pretended ac-*
 “ *cumulation of grievances* : an *Armenian* who has endeavoured to
 “ impose a belief before the Committee of the House of Commons,
 “ that he never acted as an *English gomastah* or agent, in *Bulwant-*
 “ *sing*’s dominions.—Such is the credit due to ARMENIAN FAITH !”

This *Armenian* gentleman, however, as well as the others, was really quite independent of the writer, and then resident within the territories of a Prince who would have been also independent, if the treaties or public agreements made by the servants of the *East India* Company could have been relied on to make him so. In the *Bengal* acceptation of the word, Mr. *Cojamaul*, therefore, was no more the writer’s *gomastah* than Mr. *Cartier*, Mr. *Rumbold*, and many other gentlemen of the highest rank in the Company’s service had been, who had disposed of the largest consignments from him, and been deeply concerned with him in trade, when they found it for their interest. His acting, at the same time, for Mr. *Hare*, and other persons, was also a convincing proof of this assertion. He had acknowledged, in his memorial to the *East India* Directors, as well as in his evidence before the Committee, that he had transacted business as an agent for *English* gentlemen ; but he very justly said, according to his true idea of the word, that he did not act as an *English gomastah* ; and he explains it fully in his evidence, † “ *that he*
 “ *did not trade by English authority, but paid duties as a merchant,*
 “ WHICH WAS A CHARACTER OF MORE RESPECT.” The candid reader will judge, from this quibble of Mr. *Verelst*, on a word in the mouth of a foreigner, and from the other evidence before him, whether most credit is due to the *Armenian* merchant’s, or to the *English* Governor’s FAITH.

The oppressed *Armenian* merchants, although equally as disgusted at the ineffectuality of all their applications to obtain security against future injuries, as tired at the delay they had experienced in seeking satisfaction for their past losses and sufferings, in a country where they had imagined justice was so easily attainable, still continued

* See his note, Appendix, page 189.

† Journals, vol. XXXIII. pages 916 and 918.



elated with the most sanguine expectations from the favourable verdicts of an impartial *English* jury. They, therefore, directed their whole attention to the obtaining of the speedy determinations of their actions in the Court of Common Pleas; which were set down for trial in *May* 1773: the parties on the 18th of that month having actually joined in striking a special jury, in order for the trial of *Eslephan's* cause, during the sittings after term.

To convince a generous people, how improbable it is, that a Governor and Council in *India* should be guilty of any oppressions or illegal exertions of power, Mr. *Verelst*, in his publication now under our consideration, assures them, * “it is utterly incredible, that these gentlemen would risque their own fortunes by an act which must come before an English jury;” from whom † “the experience of every day evinces, that an innocent and injured man would obtain ample compensation.”—Governors who should conduct themselves by principles of injustice, and wantonly abuse their authority, he tells us, ‡ “would not only be compelled to make full restitution to the injured individual, but would, by their punishment, become severe examples, to prevent the commission of like crimes in future;” and an *English* jury would § “eagerly redress their fellow-citizen, and VINDICATE THE RIGHTS OF HUMAN KIND.”

Mr. *Verelst*, who left *Bengal* in the month of *January* 1770, and Mr. *Smith*, who left it in *December* preceding, were both well informed, very early in the year 1769, that Mr. *Cojamaul* and Mr. *Rafael* had embarked for *England*, in order to obtain justice, by prosecutions, for the damages which they had sustained, in consequence of the oppressions and imprisonments which they had suffered.

In the year 1771, Mr. *Verelst*, being chosen a Director of the *East India* Company, had, of course, free access to all papers and records in the *India House*; and during the year 1772, when out of the Direction, he, as well as the persons employed by him to compile his *View of the Bengal Government*, which we have just quoted, were allowed the same access, for serving the purposes of that faithful compilation; a material part of which was apparently calculated to injure the causes of those very oppressed *Armenians*.

In such circumstances, with such advantages, and after the expiration of so long a period of time, the candid reader will not, cer-

* *Verelst's View*, &c. page 5.

† *Ibid.* page 13.

‡ *Ibid.* page 14.

§ *Ibid.* page 15.



tainly, have suspected, that the defendants could have any reasonable cause for putting off the trials of actions to which they had pleaded NOT GUILTY: much less will his honest mind have conceived, that Governor *Verelst* should be the first man to shrink back, in his own cause, from the determination of a jury of his fellow-citizens, whom he had so justly described. Nevertheless, the attorney for the defendants in these causes appeared in Court, on the 20th of *May* 1773, and *swore*, * “ that he apprehended and believed the defendants “ could not be properly prepared for trial at the sittings after the “ term, it being necessary, in his judgment and belief, to make “ search and examination into the books and records of the *East India* “ Company, which, as he apprehended, would require a great deal “ of time, and could not be done with due attention, so as to be pre- “ pared for trial at the said sittings.” On the same day, General *Smith* likewise appeared, and *swore*, that † “ *Gabriel Harper*, Esq; “ then abroad, he believed was a most material witness, without “ whose testimony he could not safely proceed to the trial of the “ cause; and that by the letters which he, *Smith*, had received from “ the said *Harper*, he had great reason to believe he would return “ to *England* in the course of the ensuing season:” although Cap- tain *Harper*, having been a principal in the imprisonment of those *Armenian* merchants, if he had arrived within the jurisdiction of the *British* Courts, would have been made a party to the actions, and, therefore, *could not be admitted as a witness*.

On these affidavits, the Court of Common Pleas put off the trial to the following term, which commenced the 11th, and ended on the 30th of *June* 1773. But on the 16th of *June*, Governor *Verelst* filed three very long bills in the Court of Exchequer; one against *Wuscan Estephan*, absent in *India*, and one against each of the other *Armenian* merchants, *Cojamaul* and *Rasael*, then in *England*; in which he sought a discovery from the parties, on oath, *whether he was not justified in what he had done*; and prayed, that injunctions might be granted to stop the proceedings on the actions depending in the Court of Common Pleas, until the testimony of witnesses, particularly of the *Nabob Sujah al Dowlah*, and other *Indian Princes*, could be had from *India*, under a commission to be issued out of that Court.

* See the affidavit of Mr. *John Stirrow*, Appendix E. Num. XCVII. page 429.

† See the affidavit of *Richard Smith*, Esq; 153.



If the Princes in *India*, whose evidence had become necessary for Governor *Verelst*, to prove himself “NOT GUILTY,” were independent Princes, as well might a *British* Court of Justice expect testimony, on oath, from his Majesty of *Prussia*; and if they were dependent, and, at the pleasure of the Directors or other servants of the *East India* Company, liable to be deprived of their posts; of the annual stipends allotted to them; or of the territories over which they are placed sarcastically to preside: equally obvious must be the consequences. The answer from *Estrephan*, whose case, as Mr. *Verelst* well knew, was exactly the same with *Rasael*’s, if deemed necessary by the Court, in such circumstances, could not be had, but under an express commission to be sent to *India*. To the other two bills, although very long, and the time allowed by law for answering was only eight days, Messrs. *Cojamaul* and *Rasael* respectively put in full and unexceptionable answers; and Governor *Verelst* having filed his replication on the 9th *July* 1773, these causes were again at issue.

But to support the equity of his bill against the absent *Estrephan*, in order to obtain the injunction sought, Mr. *Verelst* also appeared in Court, on the 25th of *June* 1773, and swore, * “that his bill was
 “not filed with a vexatious intent, or merely to delay the trial at
 “law, but for a discovery of the matters, and to authenticate the
 “several public acts particularly mentioned therein, by an examination of many of the witnesses therein named; that he verily believed the action at law was brought against him for matters supposed to be done by him in the *East Indies*, acting in his public capacity, as Governor of *Bengal*; that the damages laid in the declaration were twenty thousand pounds, and that many facts and circumstances, material for his DEFENCE on the trial, were only in the knowledge of the persons mentioned in his bill, residents in the *East Indies*, the benefit of whose testimony he could not have without a commission; under which he verily believed he should be able to have the depositions taken of many of the persons named in his bill, and particularly of the several Princes of the country, in amity and alliance with the *East India* Company, in whose territories the facts and circumstances happened; and that without their testimony, he verily believed he could not make a full and proper DEFENCE, on the trial of the said action.”

Yet, on such proceedings and affidavits, the Court of Exchequer, bound, as it seems, by the strict letter of the law, or the established

* See the affidavit of *Harry Verelst*, Esq; Appendix E. Num. XCIX. page 430.



practice of the Court, were forced to grant a * writ of injunction to stop the proceedings on the action brought by *Huscan Elephant* in the Court of Common Pleas, until a full answer could be had from the plaintiff in the *East Indies*: and in the causes of the two other *Armenian* merchants, who had put in full and unexceptionable answers, commissions were likewise † granted *for the examination of witnesses in India*.

After so much fruitless expence of time and money, the causes, for the prosecution of which those injured *Asiatics* came over from *India to England*, were hereby likely to be kept for years undecided. For such delay, an extensive field lay open, from the obstructions that might be contrived; besides the chances against the plaintiffs, from deaths and other accidents; and besides the disadvantages which would naturally attend them in the execution of those commissions, under the DOUBLE-GOVERNMENT in *Bengal*, as hath been more particularly shewn in ‡ the first part of this work.

Let the humane reader, then, here contemplate the distressful situations to which these *Asiatics* were reduced, in attempting to obtain justice from the so highly boasted laws of *England*, for the worst of oppressions suffered in *Hindustan*, from the excesses of tyranny and rapine, practised under a treacherous disguise, by a lawless oligarchy of trading and military adventurers, in the characters of servants to a commercial community.—They had however one resource yet left,—that of an appeal to the Right Honourable the House of Lords; of which they availed themselves. But, exhausted alike in patience and in purse, with such a melancholy prospect before them of immeasurable delay, from what they were told was the lenient indulgence of law-practice in this country, one of them, in despair, had actually departed the kingdom, lamenting the inefficacy of his applications for justice, and the improbability that appeared of his being ever able to obtain it; while the other was mournfully preparing to follow him.

On the 21st *June* 1774, these appeals came on before the Lords, when the Right Honourable Lord *Mansfield* made some very striking observations on the too-indiscriminate rule of granting injunctions on the allegations of plaintiffs in the first stages of causes in equity.—His Lordship remarked, that, in many instances, this practice, which it was too much the interest of solicitors to support, was totally

* See a copy of this writ, Appendix E. Num. C. page 431.

† Appendix E. Num. C1. page 432.

‡ Considerations, &c. vol. 1. page 88.



subversive of justice ; as in any suit brought by a foreigner, even on the clearest ground, such as bills of exchange and policies of assurance, the defendant might file a bill ; insert therein as many fables as he thought proper ; state the transaction to have happened in whatever country he pleased ; and by swearing that without the testimony of the witnesses named in his bill, he could not safely proceed to trial ; obtain, as a matter of course, a commission to examine the truth of his allegations, which might never be executed. It was also observed by his Lordship, that the sole use of the commissions obtained in these causes appeared to be delay ; and that the motives for this delay were exactly the same as those of a man who, to escape immediate danger from a tyrant-king, undertook to teach a dog *Latin* in three years, on pain of death ; and who, on his friends censuring the absurdity of his engagement, urged that he had thereby gained three chances of escaping ; as, before the expiration of the time, the king might die, the dog might die, or he might die.

The Right Honourable Lord High Chancellor *Apsley* strongly corroborated the Lord *Mansfield*'s opinion ; and observed, that as the *British* Empire was now extended to every part of the globe, it became of the highest consequence, that on all applications for commissions to examine witnesses abroad, the Courts should minutely examine into the merits of such applications :—that in the causes then before the House, there were no grounds for granting the commissions :—that as the respondents, by the plea of NOT GUILTY, had confined themselves to the fact, and the *onus probandi* lay intirely upon the appellants, no plea of justification could be admitted ; and as the books and orders of the President and Council of *Calcutta*, as well as many gentlemen perfectly acquainted with the facts and nature of the cases, were then in *England* ; every thing that could possibly be urged in mitigation of damages, might be produced on the trials, in as satisfactory a manner, as if the commissions had been actually executed.

After these debates, the Lords were pleased unanimously to reverse the orders of the Court on which the injunctions had issued, and the plaintiffs *Cojamaul* and *Rasael* were again at liberty to proceed to the trial of their actions. This righteous decree of the supreme Court of *British* Judicature at once dispelled the despondency of the *Armenian* suitors, and inspired them with new hopes of justice. *Rasael* returned from *Venice* ; and on the 12th and 13th of *December* 1774, the two-causes at last came on in the Common Pleas, before the Lord Chief Justice *De Grey* and a special Jury.



If the plaintiffs had been guilty of any malpractices or misdemeanours, in the course of their transactions, it is not to be supposed, consistently with the power and authority of the men concerned in these imprisonments, that, after so many years had elapsed, their crimes would not have been found out and exposed on these trials. However, none such appeared. The learned Counsel for the defendants called no witnesses; but, as is customary on such occasions, confined themselves to the exercise of their ingenuity before the Jury, in attempting to justify their bountiful clients, and depreciate their opponents. They rested their apology for the defendants on what had been suggested by the President and Council of *Calcutta*, as entered on the Company's records; every allegation whereof hath been fully noticed and refuted in these sheets. The inconsistencies of those pretences naturally reduced them to the absurdities of asserting, in one breath, that *Sujah ul Dowlah* was an independent Prince, possessing armies sufficient to shake the power of the *East India* Company; and in the other breath of alleging, that, without the intervention of Mr. *Vereji*, he had not authority equal to the punishment of a simple individual in his own family:—in one breath, to allege the plaintiffs were of such consequence that they could shake the Empire of *Hindostan*; in the other, to represent them so insignificant as to be unworthy of receiving any compensation for damages.

But neither the eloquence of the learned Advocates, nor the shields of the *independent* Nabobs, could defeat the penetration of the Lord Chief Justice *De Grey*, or the honest integrity of the *English* Jurors.

Not to be deceived by flimsy arguments, the Jury found verdicts against Mr. *Vereji*, of five thousand pounds for the plaintiff *Rajah*, and of four thousand pounds for the plaintiff *Gregore*.

It is true that the plaintiffs could not bring home their proofs, so as to affect the defendant *Saib*, who, although the original cause and instigator of all their sufferings, had so cautiously conducted himself in *India*, as, on the trial, to leave his colleague in the lurch. On this occasion, it was unfortunate for them that three of the principal witnesses whom they called upon had lost all recollection of the transactions. Sir *Robert Barker*, who commanded the army at *Illahabad* in General *Saib*'s absence, and to whom *Rajah* was * transmitted by Captain *Harper*, could not remember by what means the prisoner came to him, or how he was dispatched to *Patna*; Colonel

* See Appendix E. Num. XXVIII. page 370. Num. LXXX. page 411. and Num. LXXXV. page 416. See also *Mohammed Riza Khan*'s letter to Mr. *Vereji*, View of *Bengal*, &c. Appendix, Num. 124. page 203.



Charles Chapman, who commanded at *Patna*, where the guards of the prisoners were changed, remembered nothing of the matter; and *Mr. Francis Sykes*, the Resident, under whose directions *Mahomed Reza Khan* acted, at the *Durbar*, could only recollect that the plaintiffs were treated with great humanity, but knew nothing of their imprisonment.

Such were the terminations of these long-depending litigations; on which it may be truly said the *Armenian* suitors have been ruined, although they have gained their causes: for what compensation can it be deemed for these gentlemen, after the expiration of so many years, to receive less in damages than they would have gained in one year, if left unmolested to the peaceable enjoyment of their estates and trade in *India*; while a great portion of the sums decreed them hath been disbursed in the necessary charges of their passage, and their so long residence in this expensive country?

But the mediocrity of the damages can only be lamented as a misfortune that must attend all suitors from *India*, in similar cases, where the proofs of the plaintiff's losses depend wholly upon the evidence of *Hindoos*, who cannot be brought to this country without incurring such infamy as most of them would rather die than submit to; as hath been more fully set forth in the first part of this * work.

It is further to be lamented, that the laws have yet provided no penalties that are adequate to the punishment of oppressions committed under the pretence of the public good. The invader of private property, or the public robber, who pretend to no right but of force, may by force be repelled, seized, and consigned to the penal retribution of their crimes; and the life of the assassin may be taken in self-defence. But the greatest of all offenders, the oppressor who spreads forth misery and destruction over whole families, by the perversion of authority and the abuse of power, triumphs in the lenity of the law, or sets justice at defiance under the garb and sanction of magistracy.

* *Considerations, &c.* vol. I. page 89.



CHAPTER VII.

ON the MAL-ADMINISTRATION of JUSTICE by the late PRESIDENTS and SELECT COMMITTEES in BENGAL; with a VINDICATION of the AUTHOR of CONSIDERATIONS, &c. from MR. VERELST'S MISREPRESENTATIONS on that SUBJECT: and cursory Remarks on the Introduction of the *English* Laws among the *Indians*.

MUCH artful misrepresentation hath been employed, by Mr. *Verelst*, to mislead the public, upon the express charges brought by the author of "CONSIDERATIONS ON INDIA AFFAIRS," against the late Presidents and Select Committees of *Bengal*, for their wicked administration of justice, or undue interference with the Courts; but particularly in what the writer had * related concerning the complaint of an *Armenian*, named *Parseek Arratoon*, in the Mayor's Court; those of the *Hindoos*, † *Gocul Sonar*, and ‡ *Ramnaut Dass*, and of § *Alexander Jephson*, Esq;—Unfortunately for Mr. *Verelst*, he was principally concerned in all those oppressions; the mere knowledge of which, with what hath already appeared from the press on those subjects, must make it unnecessary to add much in this place, for the purpose of a complete exposure of that gentleman's fallacies. The simple evidence of facts shall, therefore, be opposed to his laboured strains of sophistry and declamation; and leave him not one evasive subterfuge.

In the case of PARSEEK ARRATOON, the writer charged two plain facts:—an undue interference with a *British* Court of Justice, on the part of the President, at *Calcutta*; and a prostitute compliance on the part of the Court. This interference was expressly charged to be, the President's writing a *private letter* to the Mayor of *Calcutta*, then sitting in judgment on a cause, in which he, the President, was himself collaterally interested; in consequence whereof,

* *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. pages 91 and 185.

† *Ibid.* page 95.

‡ *Ibid.* page 98.

§ *Ibid.* Appendix, page 43.



a sudden stop was put to the decision by the Court, while the plaintiff was left without any kind of redress.

To evade these facts precisely charged to have happened in *August* 1768, Mr. *Verelst* gives an account (*View of Bengal, &c.* page 23) of some transactions relative to the cause which happened at an inland *Cutcherry*, or one of the *Country Courts*, previous to *August* 1768; and also of what happened on a proposed arbitration, after *August* 1768, together with one intended petition (*Appendix*, page 174) which was not made use of in *August* 1768; and another similar petition (*Appendix*, page 175) of which some use was made on the 4th *May* 1770: none of which circumstances can be applied to, much less justify, the facts charged. The writer of *CONSIDERATIONS, &c.* deemed it unnecessary to enter into a minute detail of the circumstances of the case between the plaintiff and the defendants; but as Mr. *Verelst* has laboured much in attempting to impeach the writer's veracity upon the subject, it now becomes requisite for him to say something more, in order to remove the cloud of misrepresentation with which that gentleman has sought to obscure the truth.

It hath been already shewn, * that in the beginning of *June* 1765, and before the regulations for the notorious monopoly of salt were made public at *Calcutta*, a secret partnership was formed between Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Sumner*, Mr. *Verelst*, and Mr. *Sykes*, for engrossing the salt then laying in the hands of private merchants. It hath also been shewn, † that before Lord *Clive* quitted the government of *Bengal*, his shares of those salt-adventures, under the management of Mr. *Verelst*, and likewise his third part of another salt-adventure, in partnership with General *John Carnac* and Mr. *Verelst*, were sold by his Lordship, for a valuable consideration, to *Harry Verelst*, *Francis Sykes*, and *Alexander Campbell*, Esquires, each one-fourth; and to *Claud Russell* and *Thomas Kelsall*, Esquires, each one-eighth concern. Upon the departure of Mr. *Sumner* for *England*, Mr. *Verelst*, with the rest of that gentleman's concerns, had purchased also his share in the salt-adventures, so that the succeeding Governor of *Calcutta*, and the Resident at the *Darbar*, had become the principal proprietors in those salt-concerns, which were carried on, among other places, at *Nattour*, by the agency of a gentleman named *Tom Lewis*. In *September* 1767, an eminent *Almorian*

* Page 29.

† *Considerations, &c.* vol. I. *Appendix*, page 153.

merchant,



merchant, named *Parfick Arratoon*, filed a bill in the Mayor's Court against Mr. *Tom Lewis* and others, who were the agents for Messrs. *Verelst* and *Sykes*; setting forth, that he had a considerable quantity of salt in his warehouses at *Nattour*, and other places, under the charge of his gomastahs, or agents; and that the servants employed by Mr. *Lewis* for buying up all the salt in that part of the country, had applied to them to sell the complainant's salt, which they declined, having directions from their employer not to sell it. That thereupon, the servants of Mr. *Lewis* told the complainant's agents, that the price of salt was twelve annas *per* maund, and throwing down a rupee upon the ground, by way of earnest, afterwards insisted the same was a bargain, and demanded the delivery of the salt. That the complainant's agents refused to comply with this demand, as the price offered them was not more than *one-fourth part* of what they then expected for his salt; whereupon, the servants of Mr. *Lewis* broke open the warehouses, and forcibly took the salt away, to the damage of the complainant in the sum of current rupees, * 60,432.

To this bill the defendant, Mr. *Lewis*, and *Ramsfunder*, his banyan, appeared, and put in their answers; wherein they denied the several charges contained in the bill; and insisted, that the matter in dispute having been left to arbitration, had already been determined in favour of Mr. *Lewis* in a Cutcherry-court, at or near *Nattour*. To this the complainant filed his replication; the defendants rejoined; and the cause being at issue, a great many witnesses, who had been present at the disputes and controversies between the agents of the complainant and defendants, were examined, whose testimony fully proved the facts charged in the bill: and by the answer of the defendants it also appeared, that Governor *Verelst* and Mr. *Sykes* were equal partners with Mr. *Lewis* in the pretended purchase.

Mr. *Verelst* acknowledges in his † book, that “this affair, in particular, was entirely under the management of Mr. *Lewis*, who had an equal interest therein with himself and Mr. *Sykes*.” In his evidence, before the Committee of the Honourable House of Commons, he has also ‡ acknowledged that book to be his writing; and declared “it contained a full account of the affairs relat-

* 7,500 l. sterling.

† View of *Bengal*, &c. page 22.

‡ Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 463.



ing to Mr. *Lewis* :” but at the same time being asked, “ Whether Mr. *Tom Lewis* was one of the agents for the partnership ?” he said, No.

He acknowledges, that such was the pretended violence complained of by *Parseek Arratoon*, as before related ; but he insists, that the salt was * fairly purchased, and that “ the transaction “ stands above all possible imputation,” because *it came before the Cutcherry* before-mentioned, and “ an award was made in favour of “ the purchaser.”——But he has not informed the reader, that this *Cutcherry* was under the power of his partner, Mr. *Sykes* ; that it was there known, that Mr. *Verelst* at *Calcutta*, and the Resident at the *Durbar*, were the all-powerful copartners in this salt-transaction ; that their own gomastahs or dependants were the persons who declared this contract to be “ a fair and legal bargain ;” and that the injustice transacted at that pretended Court, was the foundation of the *Armenian’s* complaint in *Calcutta* ; although to impose a belief of the equity of this *Cutcherry* of iniquity, Mr. *Verelst* wrongfully confounds it with the description given by the author of *Considerations*, &c. of the regulated JUDICIAL Court of *Cutcherry* in *Calcutta*.

He acknowledges, that the cause was at † issue in the Mayor’s Court, as before described ; but he says, ‡ “ the plaintiff had “ brought the cause to a hearing upon *ex parte* depositions ;” and he excuses himself and partners, as persons § “ who could not be “ supposed to be acquainted with the forms required, or prescribed by a “ Court of Judicature.”——Yet Mr. *Verelst* himself had been, for a considerable time, one among the Judges of the Mayor’s Court.

Mr. *Verelst* acknowledges, that “ he || wrote a note to the Mayor ;” thinking his character, as well as property affected, and that he presented several petitions to the Court on the occasion ; yet, as he did not appear upon the face of the proceedings, before the Court, as a defendant, or party, nothing could be more unbecoming than the Governor’s presenting such note, or joining in such petitions, except the great indecency of the Mayor, or the Court, in admitting them to be taken any notice of

* View of Bengal, &c. page 23.

† *Verelst’s* View, &c. page 23. and Appendix, page 175.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. Appendix, page 176.

|| Ibid. page 24.



He says, that, at * *his own request*, *Petruse Arratoon* did agree to an arbitration, and chose the arbitrators for a second reference; but “distrusting probably the justice of his cause, he wanted to “insert, as a condition, that *his witnesses only* should be heard.” But the writer † can prove, that *Arratoon* only objected to the laying before the arbitrators the depositions of certain witnesses who had been brought from *Nattour* after the cause had been heard, in *August 1768*, and which had been *privately taken without an order of the Court*, and *without his having had an opportunity to cross-examine them*.

After all, this cause, the decision of which was put off in *August 1768*, upon the private request of *Mr. Verelst*, who did not appear as a party on the proceedings before the Court, was heard a second time, in the year 1770, when, even in the Mayor’s Court, the plaintiff obtained judgment for the whole of his demand, with interest and costs of suit; and the parties have thought proper to comply with that sentence, rather than appeal therefrom to his Majesty in Council. If they had justice on their side, and were so much injured by the decree as *Mr. Verelst* represents, why did they not appeal? And if the writer’s representations of this transaction were so injurious to the President, why did he not vindicate himself in *Bengal*, since his conduct therein was one of the charges fairly and openly brought against him by the writer, in his ‡ memorial of the 5th *September 1768*, on the spot, where the facts could have been fully and easily ascertained?

With respect to the conduct of the President and Council, in their double capacities of supreme Justices and Secret Committeemen, towards the *Indian goldsmith*, named *Gacul*, and the mer-

* *Verelst’s View*, &c. page 24.

† *Extract of a letter now in the writer’s possession, under the hand of Charles Sealy, Esq; Mr. Verelst’s Attorney at Law. Dated Calcutta, the 19th December 1769.*

“In the cause of *Parjeeck Arratoon*” against *Tom Lewis* and others, there are the depositions of *Ramsaw* and *Kittinarainse*, taken by *Mr. Bryer*; and the deposition of *Kisno Saran*, which I believe must also have been taken by *Mr. Bryer*, as the same is in the hand-writing of one of his clerks, although not signed by him.—The matter is about to be settled by arbitration; but *Cogee Petrusse*, who is attorney for *Cogee Parjeeck*, objects to the above depositions coming before the arbitrators, on account that they were not taken by order of the Court, and that no interrogatories were filed to the witnesses who gave the same.”

‡ Appendix E. Num. XXXI. page 512.



chant, *Rammant Dafs*, every word related by the author of * *Considerations* is strictly true; although, by confounding and interweaving the transactions of different periods, Mr. Verelst has involved the truth in great intricacy. Nevertheless, the writer, being intimately acquainted with their whole conduct in these affairs, will find no difficulty in exhibiting the facts clearly to the view of such of his readers, as may have the patience to refer to the authorities, and attend to the dates herein cited.

GOCUL SONAR's complaint against *Nobelissen* was originally made to the Grand Jury, at the General Quarter Sessions, held at *Calcutta* on the *fourth day* of *March* 1767, and this Mr. Verelst † acknowledges.—He further says, “when the petition was delivered
“ into Court, it became the duty of the Justices to decide, whether they had authority to hear the cause. Upon deliberation,
“ they were all unanimously of opinion, that a criminal charge
“ between the natives only, did not belong to the jurisdiction of
“ the Sessions. ‡ Actuated therefore by *honest motives*, the Justices
“ unanimously referred the complaint of *Gocul Sonar* to the Court
“ of Zemindar, and the business of the Sessions being finished, the
“ Juries were called, and dismissed.”

The paper in question was a presentment, delivered by *Gocul Sonar* to the Grand Jury, then sworn in, which *never came* before the Court. The business of the Grand Jury was to examine into the foundation of the complaint, and to find a *true bill*, or dismiss it, according to the merits proved before them; and it was the duty of the Judges, not to obstruct the Jury in that business. The matter would then have come legally before the Court; who, as Counsel for the accused, would have heard his objections to their jurisdiction.—But this presentment was received through the clerk, not officially, but in a private manner, from the hands of one of the Jurors, by Mr. Verelst, then sitting as Chief Justice; who, instead of returning it to the impanelled Jury, for their inquiry, as bound by his duty and oath to do, was pleased to pocket it.—There was no deliberation had on the subject, except a few private whispers among the Secret Committee-men, then sitting as Judges on the Bench, which no man present in Court could hear; after which, in an abrupt and hasty manner, they called and dis-

* *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. pages 95 to 98.

† *Views of Bengal*, &c. page 25.

‡ *Ibid.* page 27.



missed the Juries. But so far was the business of the Sessions from being finished, that none was done; although there were several *Englishmen* in prison, then waiting their trials, for crimes or misdemeanours.

As to the Court of Quarter Sessions in *Calcutta* possessing no jurisdiction in criminal charges between the natives only, the Court had uniformly exercised such jurisdiction, from the first promulgation of his Majesty's most gracious Charter of Justice. In cases between native and native, Mr. *Lawson* judiciously obviated Mr. *Verelst*'s objections, by causing the petit Juries to be composed one half of natives and the other of *Europeans*. The former Courts of *East India* Directors, in their instructions for executing the charter, had constantly given orders to their Presidents and Councils at the *British* settlements in *India*, that "if a native chooses the decision of his grievances by *English* laws, those, and those *only* must be pursued, according to the directions in the charter;" wisely foreseeing, that * "no ill effects could spring therefrom, but when their servants wrested and perverted the powers given in the charter, to serve bye-ends and purposes."

But in the same † page where Mr. *Verelst* disputes the exercise of the jurisdiction of the charter against the natives, he gives an instance to confirm it, of a man who was tried, condemned, and hanged, in the year 1762, for cutting off his wife's nose. Nor is he more fortunate in his assertion, that in *Gooden's* case, the Judges were ‡ *unanimously* of opinion against such jurisdiction: for one of those very righteous § Judges hath declared, before a Committee of the House of Commons, in his evidence upon the char-

* *Extract from the Company's orders to their servants in India, relative to the Charter. Dated in February 1750-1.*

"You say very truly that the charter transmitted to you was calculated for the benefit, ease, and good regulation of our settlements: and it is as true, that none of the effects complained of, as arising from the charter, can with any justice or reason be attributed or imputed to it.

"The charter conveys to you the laws of *England*, and prescribes the method of putting those laws in execution, and from thence no ill effects can spring. But when our servants wrest and pervert the powers in the charter, to serve bye ends and purposes, and to accomplish those ends act inconsistently with their obligations which bind them to serve us faithfully, then it is that those consequences complained of must and will naturally follow."

† *View of Bengal*, page 26.

‡ *Ibid.* page 27.

§ Mr. *Charles Sugden*. See his evidence, Reports, vol. IV. page 232.



per as it then stood, that "though the Mayor's Court cannot exercise jurisdiction over natives, unless by consent, the jurisdiction of Oyer and Terminer extends to natives as well as *Europeans*."

The jurisdiction, therefore, of the criminal Court of Cutcherry, as exercised over the natives in *Cochin*, under the denomination of the Fowzdary, or Zemindar's Court, considered consistently with the charter, has ever been wholly illegal. It has, moreover, ever been a tyrannical Court; for however convenient to a President, or Secret Committee, the power therein exercised was never any other than that of inflicting fines, corporal punishments, banishment, condemnation to work upon the high-roads in chains, and even death, at the arbitrary will of the Deputy, or Deputies of the President and Members of the Board. Such was the Court of the Zemindar, to which Mr. Verelst says the Judges at the *British* Court of Sessions, or, in other words, the President and Members of Council themselves, *unanimously* referred the complaint of Gocul Sonar; but which Mr. Fflover, the Zemindar, says *was* * *delivered to him in the month of March 1767, by the President, who desired him to enquire into it.*

This complaint was no other than the original information presented by Gocul Sonar to the Grand Jury on the 4th March 1767, which Mr. Verelst had pocketed, when he suddenly dismissed the Juries, in order to screen the accused from justice. It hath been shewn in the first part of this work, that to account for this extraordinary proceeding, it was reported about the town, that there was a want of formality in the information, from its not having been first given, and supported, on oath, before a Justice of the Peace; and that the complaint would be heard and determined by the Zemindar. Informed of the objections which were said to have been made against the formality of the presentment, and determined to seek redress from the laws of *England* only, the complainant, Gocul Sonar, on the twentieth day of † March 1767, applied to

* Appendix F. page 477.

† By an error in the printing of the first part of "*Considerations on India Affairs*," the information of Gocul Sonar was dated the 20th of *May* 1767, instead of the 20th of *March* 1767, which has given Mr. Verelst occasion for the ingenious doubts he has raised (page 29) against the authenticity of the copy of the information given by the author of "*Considerations*," page 96. As Mr. Verelst had free access to the records in the *India-house*, if he had consulted the original papers, but particularly the writer's memorial of the 12th *October* 1767, (Appendix F. page 457.)



to Mr. *Charles Ffolyer*, who was at that time the acting Justice, as well as Zemindar, expressly to receive, as *Justice of Peace*, his complaint against *Nobekissen*, and bind him over to the next sessions. This application was made in presence of Colonel *Hugh Grant* and others, as well as of the writer; and Mr. *Ffolyer*, after a sharp altercation, having reluctantly consented to do his duty as a Justice, strictly *examined *Gocul Sonar*, with an evidence named *Kisho*, and swore them to their informations; which he also undersigned, in due form, as one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace.

In order to shew the propriety of the pretended reference of *Gocul Sonar's* complaint, from the Court of Sessions to the Court of the Zemindar, Mr. *Verelst* groundlessly asserts, that the very few instances of punishment inflicted by the *British* Courts † “had spread “a general alarm;” and for proof thereof he selects a petition of ninety-five inhabitants upon the case of one *Radbachurn Metre*; who, in *February* 1765, was tried and condemned to death at the General Quarter-sessions. The case of this man, who had been banyan to several gentlemen in *Calcutta*, was, that he had forged a codicil to a will in his own favour; but being of a rich family and extensive connexions, in order to save him, ninety-five persons, chiefly his relations and fellow-banyans, were prevailed on to join in a petition to the President and Council, who had been his judges; wherein, after modestly setting forth, that the culprit had been ‡ “indicted for “and convicted of a crime of which he was intirely innocent,” they prayed the board to respite his execution, until a report of his case could be made to his Majesty in *England*, and his most gracious pleasure be known thereupon. The petitioners further prayed, that the *English* laws, by which they and their countrymen in the *British* settlements were to be tried, might be translated into the *Bengal* language. So far from having any aversion to the *British* laws, the na-

he would have found the true date was the 26th *March* 1767. Fortunately for the writer's veracity, this error doth not affect any fact that he has asserted. But it is more than probable that Mr. *Verelst* knew this to be an error of the press, since he himself has given Mr. *Ffolyer's* minute (see his Appendix, page 202) in which the month of *March* is specified, and was also the grand mover of the proceedings at the Select Committee on the 18th *April* 1767, when the *Zemindar's* report on this matter was taken into final consideration. With respect to the blank left in Mr. *Ffolyer's* said minute, in *Considerations* (page 98), of which Mr. *Verelst* takes notice, in his *View of Bengal* (page 32), it was left so, perhaps designedly, in the original minute in *Bengal*, from which the writer copied what he has there given the Public.

* *View of Bengal*, page 29. See also Mr. *Ffolyer's* minute, Appendix F. page 477.

† *Ibid.* page 27.

‡ *Ibid.* Appendix, page 177.



tives in general, as far as they were made acquainted with them, preferred them to their own in all matters which did not affect their religious customs; but particularly the trial by Juries. If the President and Council neglected to cause such translations to be made into the *Bengal* language, as were necessary for the direction of the inhabitants, they were guilty of unpardonable neglect of duty, and violation of justice. But it may be safely asserted, that if the free and general sense of *all* the inhabitants had been taken, they would have prayed to be governed by any law whatever, rather than by the undeclared will of a Secret Committee, or the arbitrary mandates of a Governor.

The other argument which Mr. *Verelst* now urges, for the propriety of referring the complaint of *Gocul Sonar* to the Zemindar, * “because the accusation related to the exercise of judicial authority in the *Cast-cutcherry* by *Nobekissen*, assisted by the ministers of their religion,” if true, would have appeared with greater propriety made judicially on the spot, when the transaction happened. But the reader must not infer from what Mr. *Verelst* has said, that there really existed in *Calcutta* a regular legal court, with officers, ministers, and records, called a CAST-CUTCHERRY, for the determination of *Gocul Sonar*’s as related to the religious purity of the † *casts* or tribes of the natives. There was then no such *cutcherry*, nor can any records be produced to prove its existence; but the adjustment of the disputes of the *casts* was a power which, upon the subversion of the country government, had been assumed by the Governor of *Calcutta*, and was delegated by him to one of his banyans; as in the present case it had been to *Nobekissen*: a power, as described in the preceding ‡ volume, which is of the most tremendous consequence to the *Hindoo* natives in the settlement, as it gives the Governor and his banyan the most unbounded and pernicious § dominion over them. In the case before us, *Gocul Sonar*’s complaint was against this very *Nobekissen*,

* View of *Bengal*, page 27.

† This word is derived from the *Portuguese* *casta*, from which language many other words have been adopted by the *English* in *India*.

‡ Considerations, &c. vol. I. page 83.

§ Upon this subject Mr. *Verelst* himself says (page 142) “The Mahomedan Governors often take advantage of this principle, when they want to extort money; and so highly do the *Hindoo*s value their religious purity, that after they have borne the severest corporal punishment, rather than discover their wealth, a threat of defilement will effect what torture has attempted in vain.”—If such the power of a *Mahomedan* Governor, what might not be effected by the *English* President of *Calcutta*, to whom all other Governors in *Bengal* are now subordinate?

who



who was suspected and accused of * crimes which he might have been enabled to commit under the cloak of that very power delegated to him by the Governor, which also served him as a shelter to set justice at defiance.—The Zemindar, Mr. *Charles Ffloyer*, was one of the gentlemen lately brought from *Madras*, who scarcely understood one word of the *Bengal* language, in which the evidence must be taken, on an affair that required the most scrupulous exactness; while his *Indian* interpreters did not possess much greater knowledge of the *English*, in which it was to be recorded. Considering, therefore, the power and influence which *Nobekissen* possessed by virtue of his various † offices; the nature of the Zemindar's Court; the letter and spirit of the King's Charter of Justice, and the express orders made thereupon by the Courts of Directors; there was no man, but much less the superior servants of the Company, or his Majesty's Justices in a *British* settlement, who, if “*actuated by honest motives*,” would have so referred the complaint of *Gocul Sonar*, from a legal Jury to the illegal Court of the Zemindar.

Let us now consider the conduct of the Zemindar, Mr. *Charles Ffloyer*, in consequence of this pretended reference. In order to explain how he had got rid of the complainant as one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, Mr. *Ffloyer* says, in *his minute of the fifth of November 1767*, that he ‡ signed the depositions as Justice of the Peace, BY MISTAKE, instead of signing them as Zemindar; although *Gocul Sonar*'s application was made to him, in the presence of witnesses, expressly in his capacity of a Justice of Peace, and no other; and although the very information to which he subscribed on the 20th

* Mr. *Verelst* says (page 29) that the witnesses (meaning, it is presumed, the complainant *Gocul Sonar* and his brother *Kisno*) “swore to the *rape* of their sister,” which is not fact. In the original deposition (of which the translation is given in the Appendix F. page 457) the expression in the *Bengal* language was *noſto cōrritè*, which signifies to violate by depriving of the *cast*, as well as by the commission of a rape; although upon a fair trial, it is probable the latter might have been found the crime.

† *Nobekissen* describes himself as being in Mr. *Verelst*'s service, and Mr. *Verelst* acknowledges him to have been his *Munſby* or *Persian* Secretary, and also *political banyan* or banyan to the Select Committee. See Appendix A. Num. XXVI. pages 146 and 148. He also superintended the collection of several considerable districts, as well as the affairs of the *casts* of the *Hindoos*: by virtue of all which there were no bounds to his power among the natives. But perhaps, because Mr. *Verelst* had another banyan named *Gocul Ghosaul*, he asserts (see his note, page 28) that *Nobekissen* was not banyan to the Governor, in order that the reader should from thence infer that this man possessed neither power nor influence.—Should we allow the utmost latitude to this equivocation, and admit that NOBEKISSEN WAS THE POLITICAL BANYAN AND SERVANT OF THE PUBLIC! did he not act under the express direction of the President?

‡ Appendix F. page 477.



of *March* 1767, as a Justice, prayed that the party accused might be bound over to the next Quarter-sessions, with which, as Zemindar, Mr. *Ffloyer* could have no business. Neither could the presentment pocketed by Mr. *Verelst*, on the bench, at the Quarter-sessions of the 4th *March* 1767, have any connexion with the complaint on oath of *Gocul Sonar*, taken *de novo* by Mr. *Ffloyer* on the 20th *March* 1767, and founded expressly on the neglect that had been shewn to the former complaint: although, in the minute above referred to, Mr. *Ffloyer* industriously confounds one with the other.

Mr. *Verelst* has not favoured the Public with the proceedings said to have been held in consequence of this matter's being so referred from Mr. *Ffloyer* Justice of the Peace, to Mr. *Ffloyer* Zemindar. But it is certain that the complainant *Gocul Sonar*, or any of his injured family, or their evidences, were never heard or examined in the Zemindary Court; nor could they ever obtain any information of what was done in consequence of *Gocul*'s complaint. The Zemindary proceedings, if any ever existed, were kept with as much secrecy as those of the *French* Bastile or the *Spanish* Inquisition, every person concerned therein being industriously precluded from any knowledge of them, as the reader will perceive on reference to our *minutes*. Here it appears, that upon an application made on the purpose by the writer, he was within twenty-four hours informed from Mr. *Ffloyer* Zemindar to Mr. *William Aldersey* and from him to Mr. *Henry Goodwin* Zemindar; which Mr. *Verelst*, in consequence of the orders he had received from the *magistrates*, refused to communicate to him any part of the present Zemindary proceedings. Nevertheless, Mr. *Verelst* has the liberty to assert before the Public, that † “had Mr. *Ffloyer* asserted a falsehood, the means of detection were abundant.”

But, from the conduct of Governor *Verelst* and his associates, it appears that, in their ideas of the administration of justice, neither the *British* Courts of Quarter-sessions nor the Zemindar's *Catcherry* were sufficient for the determination of the complaints of *Gocul Sonar* or any other man, against their *political banyan*, *Nabekissen*; for they finally transferred it into their select department, where, under oaths of secrecy to each other, the plaintiff was equally precluded from obtaining justice, and themselves secured from being detected in the injustice which they practised towards him. The candid reader

* Letter F. par. 34 to 37. pages 458 and 459.

† View of *Bengal*, page 29.



would scarcely pardon us if we did not introduce him, on this occasion, into the private recesses of our *Calcutta* Legislators and Judges. The secret records, therefore, of the *junto*, held on the 18th *April* 1767, upon this business, which have since been brought to light, are given in our * Appendix, where the reader will see the most unprecedented proceedings upon a pretended charge against *Nobekissen*, for the violation of a Brahmin's † wife, which notwithstanding it had no connexion with the complaints of *Gocul Sonar* and *Ramnaut Dass*, is introduced, and artfully blended with them, in vindication of the accused, and to give the appearance of justice to the proceedings of the Select Committee; who, although composing only a part of the board, and possessing no judicial or legal authority in the matters before them, dared to proceed in open defiance to their country's laws, to pronounce sentences of imprisonment, ‡ banishment, and flagellation, against persons unheard.

As to the complaint of the merchant *RAMNAUT DASS*, the oppressions that he suffered, and which have been slightly mentioned in our second § Chapter, commenced in the year 1765, under the government of Lord *Clive*. The writer “*thought it foreign to his purpose to relate*” the particulars of this man's sufferings at that period, as being no way necessary to illustrate the facts laid before the public in the first part of || *Considerations*; which alone concerned the conduct of the President and Select Committee of *Calcutta*, in the year 1767. But as Mr. *Verelst* seems to ¶ notice this omission as a fault, we have given, in our Appendix, all such original ** papers as have since come to our hands on the subject of *Ramnaut's* first imprisonment. On consideration of those papers, the candid reader will be forced to acknowledge, that the part Mr.

* Appendix A. Num. XXVI. page 145.

† The writer had evidence to prove, before the board, when he delivered his memorial of the 12th *October* 1767, that the Brahmin woman received, in the Governor's house, the instruction of what she was to say before the Select Committee.

‡ See the resolution of the Committee of the 18th *April* 1767, Appendix, page 155. In consequence of which, one man, named *Ramsharn Ghose*, was not only cruelly flogged, but treated with the most wanton ignominy, according to the notions of the *Hindosts*; having the lock, which, from religious motives, they preserve on the crown of their heads, called *Teeby*, shaved off, and being afterwards driven about the town of *Calcutta* upon an ass.

§ Page 62.

|| Pages 99 to 106.

¶ Vol. of *Bengal*, page 30.

** Appendix A. Num. XVI. pages 52 to 119.



Verelst acted in the first, does not redound more to his credit than his conduct in the second scene of this man's persecutions.

A perusal of the papers here * referred to, will also make it unnecessary, in this place, to trouble the reader with repetitions on the subject. After the strictest examination into the matter, it will be found, that the first imprisonment of *Ramnaut*, by the President and Secret Committee, proceeded from their desire of procuring evidence to blacken Mr. *George Gray* in the eyes of the Company, or Directors in *England*. Indeed, the pretences set up were, the benefit of the country, and the obtaining restitution for the inhabitants said to be injured at *Maldah*, where Mr. *Gray* had resided as Chief of the Company's factory. But let the reader weigh the proceedings and events in his own mind, and oppose the evidence of facts and the actions of the parties, to their pious professions of disinterestedness and regard for the welfare of the community, and he will not balance one moment on the decision.

But Mr. *Verelst* is not contented with a slight imposition upon the public. In justification of the necessity for such imprisonments, he proceeds to tell them, † “ the ordinary Courts of Justice had
“ not sufficient power to repress the evil. Had the charge against
“ Mr. *G-ay*,” of extortion, “ been true, the Mayor's Court could
“ only have obliged him to refund the money, and the penal jurif-
“ diction of the Court of Sessions extends little beyond the limits
“ of *Calcutta*.”

The jurisdiction of those *ordinary Courts* extending to restitution of property, and to life or death, what more would Mr. *Verelst* have? Will he say *Ramnaut*, when confined in *Calcutta* by the Secret Committee, was not within the jurisdiction of the *British* Courts? Will he still amuse the public by holding out the poor Nabob, and allege that the necessary witnesses could not be brought from *Maldah* to *Calcutta*? Or will he say the President and Select Committee had not power to institute a fair, open, and legal trial in a Court wherein they themselves would have presided as Judges?

Mr. *Verelst* confesses, that “ in ‡ April 1767, *Ramnaut* applied
“ by letter to the Governor, for leave to lay his case before the
“ Juries at the next Sessions, now for the first time, accusing Nobe-

* Appendix A. Num. XVI. *Considerations*, vol. I. pages 99 to 106. Appendix F. Num. XVII. page 450. and Num. XXXII. page 513. *Verelst's View*, pages 30 to 34.

† *Verelst's View*, page 32.

‡ *Ibid.*



“ *kissen* of extorting * money from him during his former confinement. † Afraid to complain at the time, he had ventured to do this at the distance of a year and a-half, although his enemy continued in his former employment.” As to the complainant’s being imprisoned this second time, Mr. *Verelst* says, he confined him ‡ “ to prevent his being tampered with and instructed in his evidence, until he could be examined by the Committee ;” but, continues Mr. *Verelst*, § “ this was not a subject of inquiry before that Court to which he wished to submit it ;” and after remarking, that “ had the complaint been founded in truth, the Committee could have done him ample justice, and punished the offending party,” Mr. *Verelst* triumphs in the poor imprisoned victim’s not producing his evidence before the Select Committee.

The truth is, that *Ramnaut* was treated with such inhuman rigour during his confinement, that not only he, but his witnesses, were intimidated to the last degree. Seeing the plaintiff himself suffered so much for merely lodging his complaint, they justly concluded that his evidences had much more to dread who might stand forth to substantiate the charges. Some of them, therefore, quitted the settlement through fear, while *Ramnaut*’s relations and advocates advised him to evade giving up the names of any witnesses unless his complaint could be brought to a fair and public trial, in a legal Court of Justice.—*Ramnaut*’s master, Mr. *George Gray*, left *Bengal* in *February* 1766, and the noble Lord, who had been both the avowed protector of *Nobekissen*, and *Ramnaut*’s original persecutor, had but left the Presidency of *Calcutta* in the latter end of *January* 1767. Mr. *Verelst*, therefore, is not surely serious when he affects surprize at *Ramnaut*’s not complaining before the beginning of *April* following ; nor when he informs the public, that his complaint was not a subject for a *British* Court of Justice.. Much less will he seriously undertake to teach the public, by what law under the *British* constitution, the Select Committee could punish the offending, and redress the injured party ; or a Governor of *Calcutta* confine a COMPLAINANT, to prevent his being tampered with, and instructed in HIS EVIDENCE.

* It appears, that complaints were made by *Ramnaut* of his being robbed of money and jewels, in *October* 1765. See the deposition of *Francis Peacock*, Esq; Appendix, page 61.

† View of *Bengal*, page 33.

‡ Ibid. page 32. See also Appendix A. page 149.

§ Ibid. the note at the bottom of the page.



Upon such principles of justice, however, the oppressed *Ramnaut* was referred to the Secret and Select Committee of Reformers, and by them at last, on the 18th *April* 1767, ordered to be transferred for further imprisonment and punishment, to their tool of a Nabob; as well to screen from detection, their secret proceedings concerning him, as to prevent him from renewing his applications to the *English* laws for redress.—* “Tired with his artifices, the Committee, at length, ordered this man to be delivered over to the country-government, that he might be compelled to make satisfaction to the persons he had injured,” in conformity to a † resolution of the 30th December 1765; and accordingly on the 3d *May* 1767, being a *Sunday*, he was bound and dragged through the city of *Calcutta* away to *Murshedabad*.

Thrice happy inhabitants of *Maldah*!—Nothing could equal the humane feelings of this holy and compassionate Committee, except the tender commiseration of the pious President, who, notwithstanding *Ramnaut*, in ‡ “a feigned name,” and by a “villainous artifice,” had bought of him, a quantity of salt and boats which he had disinterestedly sold him upon the most disadvantageous terms, yet generously refrained from receiving any part of the debt due from *Ramnaut*, until restitution had been obtained for the unhappy people who had been ruined by his villainy at *Maldah*; and who had solemnly engaged not to receive a rupee’s worth of the debt, “until all the unhappy sufferers, by *Ramnaut*’s extortions, whom he could not too much compassionate, were fully indemnified!”

—But although *Mr. Verelst* has thus piously asserted, that not a single demand was ever made upon *Ramnaut* on his account; that he had positively forbidden any such demands; and that he never had received, nor ever would receive, a single rupee from him on account of the goods he had so sold him: we have the evidence of *Ramnaut*’s letters to prove, that such demands were made upon him, under the severest § threats of corporal punishment, and even death; and that thirty-one thousand, two hundred *Sunott* rupees had been actually paid || by him, on this account, to *Mr. Richard Barwell*,

* *Verelst*’s View, page 33.

† Appendix A. page 154.

‡ Ibid. F. page 476. *Ramnaut* informed the writer, that the bargain for the salt was made by him in *Mr. Verelst*’s presence, although set down in the name of his brother *Begwanah’s*, according to a custom of the country. See Appendix, page 510.

§ *Considerations*, vol. I. page 104.

|| Ibid. Also Appendix F. page 55.



to whom Mr. *Verelst* had consigned his salt.—It is true, Mr. *Verelst* calls the letter last referred to a * *supposed letter from Ramnaut*, notwithstanding the original was delivered in to the board at *Calcutta*, with the writer's memorial of the † 5th *September* 1768, and together with the other letter therein ‡ inserted, which is still in his possession, was then ready to be authenticated and proved.—But lest it may not be permitted us to oppose the evidence of letters from such an infidel *Hindoo* as *Ramnaut*, to the testimony of so good a christian as Mr. *Verelst*, we have still the evidence of § Mr. *Barwell*, through whom the money was received; and if that should fail us, we have yet the testimony of the || Select Committee of the 18th *April* 1767, to which Mr. *Verelst* himself subscribed; also an original account of his demand made up and transmittted to *Ramnaut* by Mr. *Verelst*'s ¶ banyan, and a letter ** from *Mahommed Reza Khawn*, which was received by Mr. *Verelst* on the 1st of *August* 1768; to prove, that *the most pressing demands were made upon Ramnaut for Mr. Verelst's debt*, of which, as there now only †† remains a part unpaid, with a good faith we might conclude, that all the injured inhabitants at *Maldab* have been fully indemnified!

Much more might be said to expose the inconsistency, and prove the injustice of the proceedings of the President and Select Committee of *Calcutta*, upon the complaints of *Gocul Sonar* and *Ramnaut Dass*. But after the unprejudiced reader has perused and considered what has been already laid before him, together with the papers herein referred to, the reflections which, from the plain evidence of facts, will naturally arise in his mind, will be more than sufficient to shock his humanity. We will, therefore, now pass on to the affair of *Alexander Jephson, Esq*; which was submitted to the public by the author of †† *Considerations*, in order to shew the irregularity of the proceedings of the Mayor's Court of *Calcutta*, and not the interference of the President and Council with the Courts of Justice.

* *View of Bengal*, page 33, at bottom:

† Appendix F. page 514.

‡ Ibid. page 513.

§ *Considerations*, vol. I. note at bottom of page 105.

|| Appendix A. page 151.

¶ Ibid. F. page 514.

** Ibid. B. Num. XXIV. page 297.

†† *Verelst's View*, page 33, at bottom.

‡‡ Appendix to *Considerations*, vol. I. page 43.



Mr. *Verelst* has spared the writer the trouble of commenting upon what he has published on this case of Mr. *Jephson*. It will be a sufficient exposition to contrast his own words. In one place he says,

* “ The Author of Considerations, not contented with this happy instance of domineering power, produces another extraordinary case of Mr. *Alexander Jephson*, where the Governor and Council refused to interfere with the Courts of Justice. Mr. *Bolts* has given us full proof, viz. the memorial of an angry man to the Court of Directors. The greater part of this story is such, that I, with Mr. *De Grey*, know not how to believe the parties concerned in transacting it would admit it to be true.”

Mr. *Verelst* has cautiously avoided attempting to disprove any of the facts set forth in the memorial of the angry man, of which he here affects to doubt the truth.—Now let us see what his sentiments were, at another time, upon the subject of this very memorial, and the treatment which had been received by Mr. *Jephson*, as subscribed to by this same Mr. *Verelst*, as one of the † Directors, in a letter from the Court to their Presidency of *Bengal*, dated the 3d of *May* 1771. His words were these :

“ Par. 13th. The facts stated in the memorial laid before us are of so extraordinary a nature, and the treatment Mr. *Jephson* and his wife received seemed to us so big with oppression and injustice, that before we could judge what was fitting to be done therein, we thought it adviseable to lay the whole of the proceedings before Mr. *Sayer*, the Company’s Counsel, for his opinion, which we transmit to you herewith, together with the opinions of Sir *William De Grey*, the present Chief Justice of his Majesty’s Court of Common Pleas, and of Sir *Fletcher Norton*, formerly his Majesty’s Attorney General, and now Speaker of the House of Commons, on Mr. *Jephson*’s case.”

“ Par. 14th. It is with much concern and indignation that we observe our Courts of Justice prostituted to such purposes as must carry with them not only an indelible reproach to the Courts themselves, but to that Government by which they were instituted. And that we may intirely acquit ourselves of giving the least countenance to such illegal acts, we enjoin you immediately to receive Mr. *Jeph-*

* View of *Bengal*, page 24.

† The Directors who subscribed this letter were, *John Purling*, *George Dudley*, *Thomas Rous*, *John Woodhouse*, *John Manship*, *Frederick Pigou*, *Henry Savage*, *William James*, *John Roberts*, *Edward Wheeler*, *Henry Fletcher*, *George Coming*, *J. Hurlak*, *Harry Verelst*, *John Michie*, *Daniel Wier*, *John Harrison*, *Peter Du Cane jun.*, *James Cockburn*, and *Lawrence Sullivan*, Esquires. See the letter here referred to more at large, Reports of the House of Commons, vol. IV. pages 341 and 342.



son's appeal whenever he shall present the same, that you enquire strictly and minutely into the circumstances of his complaints, and cause full and ample justice to be done therein."

"Par. 15th. After having thus expressed our abhorrence of proceedings carrying on the face of them such evident marks of oppression, we trust that you will in future prevent any further complaints of this nature against yourselves; and that on the present occasion you will without favour or affection put in execution the advice of our Counsel, if satisfactory evidence can be obtained of such insolent * declarations being uttered from the bench as are laid to the charge of those sitting upon it to administer justice under the laws of *England*, and those laws only."

It is hoped the candid reader will find the foregoing detail to contain a complete vindication of the veracity of the Author of *Considerations*, &c. respecting what he has submitted to the Public on the matters treated of in this chapter; and that it will be found equally to stand the test of future time, unimpeachable. We will now presume to submit a few cursory remarks to his consideration on the practicability of making the *East Indians* happy under the laws of *Great Britain*.

Much hath been said on the impossibility of introducing the *English* laws among the natives in *Bengal*; although no judicious man acquainted with *India* ever yet adopted the idea of an universal introduction of such laws. The truth is, that the men who have made the greatest clamour upon this subject have been such as wished not to see any law at all introduced, that they and their friends might have the greater latitude left for continuing to govern or plunder at will with impunity. Among the foremost of such writers appears Mr. *Verelst*, who, in order to deter the Legislature from introducing any part of the *British* code among the *Indians*, represents them,

* The declarations alluded to in this paragraph, as uttered from the bench, refer to a charge contained in the memorial of Mr. *Jephson* to the *East India* Directors (which was first published in *Considerations*, &c. Appendix, page 43. and afterwards in the Reports of the House of Commons, vol. IV. page 338.) against *Cornelius Goodwin*, Esq; late Mayor of *Calcutta*, that when sitting in judgment he had declared "they had nothing to do with the laws of *England* there, nor would he so much as hear them named while he sat upon the bench." As this affair was first given to the Public in *Considerations*, &c. the writer has thought it incumbent on him to exhibit the termination of it. He has therefore given Mr. *Goodwin's* justification before the Governor and Council at *Calcutta* in January 1772, as taken from the seventh Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, made on the 6th May 1773, together with the memorial of Mr. *Richard Whittal*, on the same subject, as delivered to the Honourable Chairman of that Committee on the 17th June 1773. See Appendix A. Num. LIII. page 267. and Num. LIV. page 273.



contrary to fact, as an ignorant uncivilized people. He deduces his laboured arguments from the intricate systems of presumption and * implication, derived from antiquity, in the *English* law, and endeavours to frighten the reader with the long † train of one hundred and sixty capital felonies created by *British* Acts of Parliament. Not contented with this, he is pleased to assert, that in *Bengal* the people do not even ‡ suppose justice due from the magistrate, and that § “we might as well transplant the full-grown oak to the banks “ of the *Ganges*, as dream that *any part* of a code, matured by the “ patient labours of successive judges and legislators in this island, “ can possibly coalesce with the customs of *Bengal*.”

Happily for the natives of *India*, the cloven foot at last appears. || “Let *British* laws,” says Mr. *Verelst*, “be adopted in *Bengal*, the “ President of our settlement will possess neither power nor *prerogative*, but will sink to a level with the meanest.”

It is admitted, were the *English* laws, with all the intricacies incident to their complex administration, and the shoals of lawyers necessary to uphold their “*glorious uncertainty*,” to be introduced among the subjugated natives of *India*, they would labour under misfortunes much greater than any that have yet befallen them: for the *Hindoss*, too, have their code, which has been equally matured by the wisdom of ages, and is as suitable to them as their climate is adapted to the soil they tread. When time shall again have cleared the *Hindeo* system from the ruins of successive revolutions, and from the darkness wherewith it has been obscured by the difficulties of a dead language unknown to the whole world, or by the priestcraft and ignorance of the modern Brahmins, perhaps the more we learn of it, the more we shall admire it. With the *Hindeo* or the *Mahomedan* system it would, therefore, be equally as impolitic as it is unnecessary to interfere.

But although there is no necessity for transplanting the whole trunk, much less any of the decayed branches, nor any prospect of their flourishing on the banks of the *Ganges*; yet the grand shoot and main support of the *British* full-grown oak would take root and prosper in any climate; and particularly in *Bengal*, at this crisis, if the *prerogative*, as Mr. *Verelst* calls it, of the Governors, be not

* View of *Bengal*, &c. page 136

† Ibid. page 141.

‡ Ibid. note, page 136.

§ Ibid. page 131.

|| Ibid. page 143.



purposely exerted to prevent it's growth.—We mean the trial by Juries.

The great risk to which the natives in the interior provinces are exposed is from the *English* gentlemen becoming the only merchants and the supreme judges, as well as collectors, in the districts under their superintendency; which, as hath been particularly mentioned in the * preceding volume, is so easily in their power from the authority and influence they possess. The *British* legislature, however, can easily prevent those evils, by enacting that no *European* shall preside in any of the inland Courts, and by fixing the native Judges in their offices for life, to be irremovable, except only for malversation, by the same supreme power at *Calcutta* which may appoint them.

The *East Indians* have also an immemorial custom of deciding differences among themselves by arbitrators mutually chosen, which cannot be too much encouraged. This, as well as the trial by Juries, might be adapted, by the *British* legislature, to the dispositions of the people, and to the relation in which they stand to their present conquerors, without interfering with their *casts*, or with any of their customs, civil or religious; and might with equal ease be promulgated throughout the conquered provinces. None of the *Hindoo*s, except a few of the Brahmins, know any thing of the *Sanscrit* or *Shanscrit* language, in which their *Shastres* are written; and few of the *Mahomedans* in *India*, except their Muftys, Kazys, and Priests, understand *Arabick*, in which the Koran is written: by which books they are respectively guided. An *English* Act of Parliament, confined to the beforementioned objects, and adapted to the situations of the *Hindoo* and *Mahomedan* natives of *Bengal*, might with little difficulty be translated and printed in the *Bengal* language, which would be a method of promulgation far preferable to a *Persian* translation, as it would be proportionate to the capacities of the lower classes of the people, on whom the agriculture and manufactures of the country wholly depend.

For the purposes of these grand outlines of justice which the writer has presumed to mention, it is not necessary to embarrass the question with disquisitions on the ancient power of the *Nazim* or the *Dewan*, which no longer subsist; with definitions of the names of the *Hindoo* or *Mahomedan* magistrates, and of their respective powers; or with details of their particular laws or usages. These

* *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 162.



might be safely left to the native Judges, of whom at least fifty might be appointed with annual salaries, at less expence to Government than one *European*.

When the wisdom of the Legislature shall no longer think it expedient or honourable for the Sovereign of *Great Britain* to appear to hold kingdoms of the acknowledged dependant creatures of the servants of a commercial society of his own subjects; and when the beforementioned modes of decision among the natives, by Juries, Arbitrators, and Judges of their own, shall be thus adopted and established as fundamental and immutable laws throughout the *Bengal* provinces, under an act of the *British* legislature, to be carried into execution by the Court of Justice lately established; there will be an effectual stop put to the repetition of those scenes of anarchy which have enabled * “ *the banyans of English gentlemen, wherever they reside, intirely to govern the Courts of Judicature, and frequently to sit as Judges in those Courts:*” and which have even furnished opportunities for a menial domestic of the Chief at a subordinate factory, of his own assumed authority, to hold Cutcherry-courts, to decide differences and inflict corporal + punishments at will. The natives would receive such laws with infinite satisfaction; and as they would prove the best check that can be devised, to guard them against the oppression of their rulers, they would also make the best amends to those natives for what they have suffered, by laying the surest foundation for their future happiness.

* See the Reports of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons 1773, vol. IV. page 325.

+ *Gonesbam Dafs*, the *Munshy* or *Persian* Secretary, lately gone out with the Judges to *Bengal*, was one who had received a severe flagellation at such a Cutcherry, by a decree of the *Khansumah* or Butler to Mr. *Thomas Rumbold*, during the chiefship of that gentleman at *Patna*, upon the occasion of a quarrel with one of the *Khansumah*'s comrades.



C H A P. VIII.

REMARKS ON THE WRITER'S CASE; with a REFUTATION of such CHARGES brought against him in MR. VERELST'S VIEW, as are not noticed in the other Parts of this Work.

IN all attempts to perplex or misguide the public judgment, plausible artifice will be employed for the purpose of disguising truth, or specious fallacy used for evading it.

Without furnishing a single proof in support of his assertions, Governor *Verelst* * accuses the author of *Considerations*, of having studiously involved his work in confusion and perplexity. Yet did the man he attacks arrange his matter under distinct chapters, for the sake of precision, and to avoid the confusion which is apt to arise from a more diffused mode of writing; in which the Governor, on the contrary, seems truly to have imitated the scuttle-fish, by fouling the current of argument to facilitate his escape. In what is called an *Introduction* to his work, Mr. *Verelst*, and his assistants, have jumbled together the different transactions of very distant periods in one unconnected mass. By so doing, like cunning Sophists, they endeavour to steal from facts into a cloud of vague declamation, and then confidently lay the fault of confusion at the door of their antagonist. But this is a subject which it is unnecessary to enlarge upon, because there can be no intelligent and impartial reader of both books who will not laugh at such accusations. It will be happy for our Governor, if the reader as readily acquit him of the charges which, by his publication, he has now drawn expressly upon himself.

He asks, † “Should a discontented man collect facts for the purpose of misrepresentation? Should many circumstances be suppressed to give false colouring to others? Should a work of this kind be given to the world, when many persons concerned in these transactions are at the distance of half the globe; and when many now in *England*, not conscious of misconduct, had ne-

* *Verelst's View*, page 2.

† *Ibid.* pages 21 and 22.

“ neglected



“ neglected to preserve authentic vouchers, respecting *ordinary occurrences*, amidst an infinite multiplicity of affairs? It will not be expected that I should follow such a writer through all his *filth*, *industriously collected*.”

To these questions it may be justly replied, that it is highly absurd to accuse a man of collecting *facts* for the purpose of *misrepresentation*. Nor less ridiculous and disingenuous is the charge of suppressing *many* circumstances, to give a false colouring to *others*, without instancing one so suppressed; while Mr. *Vereest* appears, in no respect, destitute of matter, good or bad, false or true, for endeavouring to blacken his opponent.

But it may be asked, did Mr. *Vereest*, or any of the Select Committee or Council, return to *England* without being fairly warned of public accusations to be made by their accuser, even given to them in his own hand-writing? Certainly not, as hath been shewn by numerous documents. Why then so unprovided of means for vindicating their public conduct, in a matter so very important as the administration of justice?

Equally void of foundation is Mr. *Vereest*'s allegation, that many of the persons concerned in those transactions were at the distance of half the globe; for it is scarce possible to conceive, that circumstances could have combined more opportunely, to collect a greater number of those gentlemen together from so distant a country, at one period, than have actually been on the spot, in *England*, both at the time of the publication of *Considerations on India Affairs*, and since.—Three respective Presidents, the whole Select Committee, the whole of the Councils, except one or two members of no consequence, together with their numerous tribes of dependant creatures, and others, all more or less acquainted with the transactions in question, to the amount of near forty men, whom we could name, were to be found in *Great Britain* in the years 1772 and 1773.—Nay we will go further, and defy Mr. *Vereest* to instance one fact positively asserted by the author of *Considerations*, the veracity of which could not be fully ascertained by *viva voce*, or written evidence, in *England*, during the before-mentioned periods.

With respect to suppressions, artfully intended to mislead the public, the author of those *Considerations* can only solemnly assure the reader, that he is totally innocent of any wilful suppression of truth. Where he has not given whole letters or proceedings at length, it was because he could not obtain them. The most trivial information was always industriously withheld from him both in
India



India and in *England*; although, as hath been mentioned in another place, Mr. *Vereff*, and the gentlemen whom he employed to write his book, were allowed free access to the Company's records in the *India-house* for their assistance. Nay, even after the publication of Mr. *Vereff*'s view, frequent applications were made, by the *East India* Directors to General *Burgoyne*, Chairman of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, to exclude the writer from the Committee-room, in order to debar him from obtaining that information to which other persons were admitted, in which he was much interested, and to which every man had a right, on so public an inquiry. Such materials, however, as he did possess, he arranged in the best manner he could; and considering the difficulties which he laboured under, the surprize rather should be, that he acquired so many. With better materials, could he have obtained them, his detection of the gross impositions on the *East India* Proprietors, and the nation, might have been rendered more compleat. But all he now contends for, is the truth of the facts produced, and the justness of the conclusions drawn from them.

Mr. *Vereff*'s * charge of the writer's making false quotations is, in one instance, grounded on a supposition of his having wilfully suppressed a sentence, in order to interpret the letter from the Court of Directors of the 19th *February* 1766, forbidding the general trade in salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, as a prohibition of the monopoly established by Lord *Clive*, which not being then known in *England*, consequently could not be condemned.

But the reader who considers the † passage referred to, and adverts to facts, will probably think this a mere cavil upon words. It hath been shewn, that in the year 1764, Lord *Clive* represented to the *East India* Directors and Proprietors, that one of the great causes of the untoward state of their affairs in *Bengal*, was the Company's servants and others *usurping from the natives* the inland-trade in salt, beetlenut, and tobacco; and he therefore advised the prevention of it in future. This bait being very readily swallowed, his Lordship, with the Select Committee appointed under him, were directed to reform that abuse. What the Directors meant to prevent was evidently the *English* trading in those articles, under what they called a "*forced construction of the Firman*," duty-free, in prejudice of the natives. But no sooner was his Lordship em-

* View of *Bengal*, &c. pages 8 and 9.

† *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 185.



barked for *India*, than he formed the plan of an universal monopoly in those articles, to the total exclusion of the natives; which was afterwards carried into execution by the Committee, chiefly to their own emolument, so early, that there was full time for any man, who had not access to their records, to conclude the Directors might have been informed of it before the 19th of *February* 1766.

Lord *Clive* could carry no orders out, relative to this trade, but what were in favour of freedom; and no regulations in favour of *Europeans* could be intended, to the prejudice of the *Asiatics*, because it was in particular alleged, that they were designed to be made easy in those matters. Whether, therefore, the Directors were informed of the monopoly erected in the beginning of the year 1765, by Lord *Clive* and his Committee, as they ought to have been, or not, when they wrote the letter under consideration, is entirely immaterial, it being certain, they meant that their orders should be considered as general; for they no sooner did hear of the establishment of that monopoly, than they gave positive orders for its abolition, and in every subsequent letter repeated them. Had the wonderful worthies of *Calcutta* thought themselves ever really authorized to establish such a monopoly for their own benefit, would they have deemed it necessary to bind one another, by a penalty-bond, of three hundred thousand pounds, to an union, in resisting any orders of the Directors for putting an immediate end to the business?

Another happy instance of the writer's want of candour, according to Mr. *Verelst*, is, that he has mis-quoted a passage from Mr. *Scrafton*. Hardly driven indeed, for matter to condemn, must be the critic who undertakes to censure a writer on affairs of great importance, when he turns so wretched a word-catcher, as to cavil * twice at a quotation, in which the expression was only varied to give it force; without, in any degree, altering the sense. Nay, the author of *Considerations*, &c. could not mean to give it merely as a quotation, because he actually incorporated the words as a part of his own sentence, and referred to the original writer for authority of the fact, which he had fairly represented. We produce these instances of captious cavil, out of a great number that might be

* *Verelst's View*, pages 15 and 18. Mr. *Scrafton's* words are, "All our affairs being so happily circumstanced, Colonel *Clive*, at the Subah's request, marched to punish those Rajahs who had joined the *Shahzadah*."—The author of *Considerations* (page 25.) has said, "who had dared to join," &c.



exhibited of equal insignificance, to shew the spirit of Mr. *Verelst*, and his assistant writers; and shall forbear disgusting the reader with any further observations of so trivial and ridiculous a nature.

Mr. *Verelst* * repeatedly lays a stress on the writer's having assured the Select Committee, that he did not intend to enter into any new inland-concerns in trade, or to prosecute any but such as he had been then some time engaged in; and also upon his not having voluntarily departed for *Europe*.

Enough has been already said in pages 62, &c. to explain the nature and cause of that assurance; but it is not less ridiculous to reproach the writer for not having carried his intentions, with respect to his own private business, into execution, than it is ungenerous in Mr. *Verelst*, and his Council, to upbraid him with not having departed for *Europe*, when they did every thing in their power to render that step equally imprudent and impracticable for him.—By their sudden seizure of the *Armenian* merchants, who acted as his agents, and continuing them imprisoned from *March* to *August* 1768, he was not only deprived of the benefit of his old contracts, for which he had paid the Princes of the country large sums of money, and of his property in effects and outstanding debts, to the amount, all-together, of full fifteen thousand pounds, but he was thereby laid under a necessity of continuing in *Bengal*, to adjust his numerous and intricate accounts, depending with the natives of the upper provinces, and to pay such as had demands upon him; from doing of which his *Armenian* agents had been arbitrarily prevented. This kind of justice was formerly deemed by the *East India* Directors an object of such importance, that it was made an express article in the covenants of persons licensed by them to go to *India*, and has likewise been continued in all the modern † covenants, that they should not leave the Company's settlements before they had faithfully paid all such sums as they might be justly indebted to the black merchants, or to any other foreigners, or merchants, not being his Majesty's subjects.

In the third chapter, it has been frequently shewn, that when the Governor and Council were so very urgent for the writer's departure to *Europe*, he made repeated representations to them of the state of his outstanding concerns, and of the property of other per-

* *Verelst's View*, pages 34 and 41.

† See these covenants, Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. pages 176 to 183.



sons then under his management; but they refused to interfere, either in the securing, or the remitting to *Europe* of any part thereof: and the truth is, that the writer did enter into no new inland-concerns in trade, but such as were requisite for that security and remittance.

What Mr. *Verehl* says of the * timidity of the public officers, and the incapacity of *the country-government*, for checking the oppressions committed by those who took upon them the character of *English* agents, is extremely ridiculous, because it is well known, they could make their dependant native-government do whatever they ordered, either with respect to the punishing, or the protecting of such agents. But it is worse than absurd, to affect supposing, that those who had no protection from the Company in their trade, and whom their principal servants sought to hinder from trading at all, would dare to insult a foreign power, which could crush them in a moment; or that such persons could carry on any trade with cheating such a government of its duties, and insulting its officers; or otherwise than by every species of licit conduct, and the most respectful behaviour.

What is said of no discrimination that need be made between the European and the native, in the prosecution of a fair trade, nor of no political distinction attempted under the government of *Bengal*; or even during the administrations of any of the *English* governors of *Bengal*; though, during the latter, there were no distinction practised alike towards natives and foreigners. But the European, being prosecuted, can never be on too free a footing; for he supplies imports on the cheapest terms, and pay most for the best dealers for any country. The only kinds of trade that are contrary to the sound principles of policy and commerce are MONOPOLIES; which, in the *Bengal* provinces, as in all other parts of *India* where the *English* power prevails, should alone be practised by the superior servants of the Company. The true motive, therefore, of the anxiety of the President and Select Committee in 1765, for removing *Europeans* from the interior country was, to have the field clear for their own monopolies, or such sort of dealings as made it their interest to remove all checks, while the propriety of the measure was pretended to be founded on the necessity of complying with the orders of the Directors, whom, upon other occasions, they obeyed, or disobeyed, as they thought

* *Verehl's View*, page 30.



proper. There is no doubt but complaints against some *European* agents might be founded on truth; but why were they not properly inquired into and redressed; and equitable checks established for the prevention of future irregularities, since the whole power of legislative and executive government rested with the President and Board at *Calcutta*?

But what will the reader think of the language which is now held on this subject by Mr. *Verelst*, who, in *July* 1764, gave as his solemn opinion to the board, that it was highly eligible, and even political, to employ *Europeans* as agents, in preference to Black gomastahs; and that if they were guilty of offences in the inland-country, where the *British* laws could not reach, the board had still a sufficient authority for administering justice by the laws of *Hindustan*? Certainly, general invectives on this subject come with a bad grace now, from a gentleman who had given such an * opinion, and during whose government, soon afterwards, in *Bengal*, no enormities were *legally* proved against any agents or gomastahs, but his own.

On the same subject, nevertheless, Mr. *Verelst* has the *modesty* thus to proceed: † “The reader who will carry in his mind, the
“ distinction arising between the *English* agent and the native, from
“ the want of a controuling power over the former, will readily
“ conceive, the nature of that *fair, open, and unrestrained* trade, in
“ favour of which Mr. *Bolts* so vehemently declaims; and also of
“ those numberless oppressions, groaning under which, Mr. *Bolts*
“ accumulated, *in the space of six years*, a larger fortune than many
“ gentlemen, who have resided twenty years in *India*, and filled
“ the highest stations in the Company’s service.” And in a note to illustrate this text, he further says, “Mr. *Bolts* arrived in *Bengal*
“ in the summer of the year 1760, and resigned the Company’s
“ service in *November* 1766; during which time he was only a
“ junior servant, and far below the rank of Council in the Presidency.”

The charge here intended to be brought, if any thing be really meant, must be, that the writer got his fortune dishonestly, and by oppression. How far he deserves injurious reflections for asserting the rights of licit trade and commerce, he freely leaves to the determination of the candid reader, while he proceeds to answer

* Appendix A. Num. IX. page 25.

† *Verelst*’s View, page 30.



this implied charge, with as little possible egotism as the nature of the case will admit.

The facts on which his answer is founded may be all collected from the preceding sheets. It is true, that the writer acquired a fortune of upwards of ninety thousand pounds sterling during his residence in *India*, as his books, now in the possession of his assignees, clearly evince; but as he went out to *India* in the year 1759, and was forcibly sent away from *Bengal* on the 23d September 1768, Mr. *Verelst* should have given him credit for eight instead of six years industry, even after allowing for the time lost at sea. Besides the fortunate circumstances attending the writer's situation upon his first introduction into *India*, which have been described in the ninth and tenth pages of this volume, particularly his partnership with two gentlemen in Council, at a period when the trade of *Bengal*, and over all *India*, was very lucrative; the writer had also very extensive joint-dealings with most of the * servants of the Company, who were then in the highest stations: from all which he not only reaped considerable emolument, but established a great credit among the native merchants. A strenuous exertion of industry, with the concurrence of circumstances so much in his favour, might naturally be expected to advance the writer's fortune very fast: though it was not in a degree altogether so extraordinary as not to be paralleled by many examples in this country, or any other.—With regard to the very low station, or rank, in the service of the Company assigned to him by Mr. *Verelst*, although neither merit or credit can be derived from such an accidental circumstance, a reference to the list of covenanted servants in the † Appendix, will shew the reader what foundation that gentleman had for his insinuation on this head.

But after quitting the subject of the writer's acquisitions in point of fortune, at page 31, Mr. *Verelst* once more resumes it, in page 38, in the following candid manner:

“ Mr. *Bolts* arrived in *India* in the year 1760, and we soon find him a principal figure amidst the *groupe of traders*. The extent to which this gentleman engaged, and the moderation with which he conducted himself, will be best known from his fortune of ninety thousand pounds, gained *within six years*; toge-

* Mr. *John Cartier*, Mr. *Thomas Rumbold*, Mr. *Charles Stafford Playdell*, Mr. *Samuel Middleton*, Mr. *Ascanius William Senior*, and many others.

† Appendix A. page 49.

“ ther



“ther with the extreme eagerness with which he endeavoured,
 “upon all occasions, to degrade the authority of the government,
 “and prevent any effectual protection being given to the * natives.”

In the cases of *Gocul Sonar* and *Ramnaut Dafs*, inserted in the preceding chapter, it hath been fully shewn who were the men to *prevent any effectual protection being given to the natives*. It hath been likewise shewn, that the writer's trade in *India* was equally beneficial to the country and to the Company; and his books, which are now accessible to all his creditors, among whom Mr. *Verelst* may yet have some partizans, will also prove, that his fortune was acquired with all possible fairness: and that the medium of the net profits gained by him, in the most favourable times, never exceeded twenty-five *per cent. per annum*, upon the capital traded for. These are facts which he cheerfully leaves to the unerring tests of time and truth, while he invites even his enemies to the scrutiny. Among Mr. *Verelst*'s virtuous adherents in *India*, and in *England*, of all complexions, is there a man who can lay his finger on a fact that shall impeach the writer's honour, or integrity, as a merchant, or a Company's servant; as a judge, or a private member of society?—But perhaps the reader will think he has already honoured Mr. *Verelst*'s general declamation, on these points, with too much notice, and that the writer's greatest crime was the possession of a fortune acquired by honest industry.

Upon the whole, therefore, of Mr. *Verelst*'s implied accusation of guilt in the speedy acquisition of a fortune by trade, against a man whom he and his confederates have so wickedly injured, without proving one + fact in support of his insinuations, it may not be thought improper to entertain the reader with a few strokes of re-
 crimination, by way of farther answer. The

* Nothing can be more puerile, or absurd, than the references made on this word by Mr. *Verelst* to corroborate his assertion. He refers to the writer's letter to Mons. *Gentil*, and to the paper transmitted to *Johannes Padre Rafael*, which are given in the Appendix E. Num. II. page 347, and Num. XXXVIII. page 379.

+ In a note, page 34, Mr. *Verelst* indeed, as a kind of authority, quotes the writer's evidence given before a Committee of the Honourable House of Commons, that he entertained 150 agents. As this may otherwise impress an idea prejudicial to the writer, it is necessary to explain the matter. . . The evidence given before the Committee (See Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 287.) stands as follows:

Q. “Who were the agents you employed in those concerns you entered into after your resignation?”

A. “I had above 150; and amongst others the two *Armenians* who have given evidence, but these were only employed in collecting outstanding debts, and disposing of goods and contracts which were on hand before my resignation.”

Now



The * self-praising Select Committee of Reformers, with their associates, the declared enemies of all rapid acquisitions of wealth, commenced their righteous administration for the reformation of *Bengal* in the month of *May* 1765. Such was their assiduity in accomplishing their disinterested views, as we find by Mr. *Verelst*'s book, that *William Brightwell Sumner*, Esq; who relinquished his pretensions of succeeding to the government, † returned to *England* in *December* 1766; ‡ Lord *Clive* and General *Carnac* in *January* 1767; § *Francis Sykes*, Esq; the *Durbar-Resident*, in *November* 1768; and || Mr. *Verelst*, who succeeded Lord *Clive*, and was not worth six thousand pounds in the year 1760, resigned the chair * on the 16th *December* 1769.—Besides these gentlemen, who all returned with ministerial fortunes, Colonel *Richard Smith*, who succeeded General *Carnac*, ¶ requested leave to resign his employments on the 7th *February* 1768, which was within less than three years from his return to *India*; although he did not leave *Bengal* till *December* 1769. This gentleman, notwithstanding all the emoluments of his appointments as an officer in *India* had been reduced to ** “the scanty pittance of seven hundred pounds per annum,” had been so fortunate as a merchant and dealer in politics, that on his return to *England*, he was enabled, from the overplus of his abundance, to offer, in a public subscription, fifty thousand pounds as his subscription towards a fund for relieving his late constituents from the impending bankruptcy to which their successes in *India* had reduced them. †† Mr. *Alex-*

Now, if the audience should in truth have been recorded, *I had about 15*; but the writer did not perceive the error in time for its being corrected; for although in the *margin* it was explained to the Committee-clerk, in the common acceptation of the word *gomastah*, or *agent*, including superintendants at all the writer's manufactories, it might be justly written 150, yet it is not true, that the writer ever employed 150 head-gomastahs, or agents, in the sense it is applied by Mr. *Verelst*, who well knows there are not fifty places in the provinces at which so many head-gomastahs, or agents, could be advantageously stationed by any single merchant. For his justification, the writer can only appeal to his books, now in the hands of his assignees, wherein it will appear, there were not, at any one period, above fifteen different places, called *Murungs*, at which he had gomastahs; which was nothing extraordinary for a merchant in so extensive a way of business.

* See notes, pages 24 to 27, and Appendix A. page 144.

† *Verelst*'s Appendix, page 40.

‡ Ibid. page 47.

§ Ibid. page 87.

|| Ibid. page 120.

¶ Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 292.

** See the words of Colonel *Smith*'s own letter, *ibid.* page 291.

†† *Verelst*'s Appendix, page 68.



ander Campbell, who is said to have been taken from the *Post* station of a critical reviewer; who was made both assayer and mint-master for the perfection of the gold coinage; and who was afterwards promoted to the important joint-posts of secretary and member of the Select Committee, for the convenient purposes of his pen and vote, found himself enabled to return to *England* so early as the commencement of the year 1768; Mr. *Richard Becher*, in the month of *January* 1771; and Mr. *James Alexander* in *February* 1772. So, likewise, of the four gentlemen who came from *Madras* in the month of * *February* 1766, for the same purposes of reforming *Calcutta*, and getting money slowly, Mr. *Clara Russell* and Mr. *Thomas Kelsall* left *Bengal* in *December* 1771, and Mr. *Charles Esler* in *February* 1772.

The candid reader will, therefore, readily admit that, in comparison with the few gentlemen whom we have enumerated, the writer moved like a mere sluggard in the acquisition of riches. But if to have acquired a fortune honestly was his only crime, he has been effectually punished for that also, since in consequence of the oppressions of the Presidency of *Calcutta*, during the administration of the before-mentioned gentlemen, he now sees himself without any fortune at all.

But Mr. *Verey* alleges, that † the writer was a “great leader of sedition; and *no sooner* was *Ramnaut* ‡ proved to have committed more than ordinary violence, than he became this gentleman’s agent, confidant, and friend.”

It has been already shewn, that the writer only attempted to assist that oppressed man, by putting him in a way to obtain justice; and Mr. *Verey* himself acknowledges, that § “to prefer a criminal charge to the proper Judges, is the legal right, nay the duty of each individual citizen.”—As to *sedition*, he stood single, and unsupported, to oppose the torrent of injuries that was poured forth to overwhelm him. During all his disputes with the President and Council at *Calcutta*, he never asked the assistance or the suffrage of any man; and he denies Mr. *Verey* to give a single

* They took their seats at the board in *Calcutta* on the 12th *February* 1766.

† *Verey’s View*, &c. page 31.

‡ These pretended proofs were the private allegations of the President and Select Committee in 1765; and the writer did not attempt to assist that injured man in obtaining justice before *April* 1768.

§ *Verey’s View*, &c. page 13.



proof of his ever having attempted to bias any man to influence his actions. His *sedition*, therefore, was co the compass of his own breast.

Mr. *Verelst* and his Council, apprized of the utility, other charges against this *low servant* of the Company, make him a man of great consequence, and at last have recourse to the stale trick of ascribing to him dangerous designs against the state; although his prosperity and fortune were more dependent upon the welfare of the Company and the tranquil possession of their acquisitions than those of any other man then under their government in *Bengal*.—He had * “*by his intrigues endangered the peace of India*.”—Ask them upon what they ground this charge, and they will tell you he wrote a letter to a † *Monsieur Gentil*, who lived at the Court of their ally, the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*, importing that the King of *England* was going to send a Governor to *India*; or perhaps they will inform you, he actually furnished that Nabob with a seventy-gun ‡ ship, to oppose the Governor’s landing.

In short, upon a view of the whole proceedings of President *Verelst* and his Council, nothing will be found against the writer but the most ridiculous accusations, founded only on the bare assertions of § *men* whose public conduct he had openly arraigned, *but never was the aggressor*; that those charges, as hath been clandestinely penned against him, and no opportunity given him of justifying his conduct; that he was even illegally removed from the office which he held for life, under the charter, of his Majesty’s Judges, without being ever called upon to shew why he should not be removed; and that, without having been guilty of any crime or misdemeanour, he was afterwards suddenly seized by a military guard, and forcibly transported from *Bengal* to *England*. Yet with matchless bronze doth Mr. *Verelst* make the following interrogatory appeal to the Public on these subjects: § “Was Mr. *Bolts* (whose whole continuance in *Bengal* was one scene of complaints, replies, reprimands, and contentions) transported unaccused, or unheard in his defence?”

* *Verelst’s View*, &c. page 5.

† See Appendix F. page 481

‡ This was the model of a ship completely rigged and equipped, of about five feet long, which the writer sent as a curiosity to that Nabob. But as he has not yet discovered that the President and Council have mentioned it in their public dispatches to the *East India* Directors, he has reason to imagine, that this charge, being the most important of all, is kept in reserve against him.

§ *Verelst’s View*, &c. page 7.

But



But there still remain a few charges that may be thought to affect the writer in his public as well as private character, of which it is necessary some notice should be taken before we conclude this chapter.

In the comparative estimate, given in the first volume of *Considerations*, &c. page 52, of the difference of advantages between Governor *Spencer's* and Lord *Clive's* treaties, in 1765: the author is accused by Mr. *Verelst* of having assumed *, as a permanent revenue, the five lacks per month received from the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah*, which, he says, by the terms of the treaty, were to be paid during the war with *Sujah al Dowlah* only. Mr. *Verelst* will not seriously argue upon the sacred observance of treaties made by the *East India* Company; nor will he give us an instance of money that was once stipulated for, ever being relinquished by them or their servants. The writer, however, did not assume that *postulatum* without good grounds; for it was the irresistible determination of the President and Council to convert that temporary assignment, of five lacks *per* month, into a + perpetuity.

Neither was the author of *Considerations* wrong in estimating the Zemindary of the Rajah *Bulwantsing* at *forty-five* lacks *per annum*, as subsequent events have fully evinced; although Lord *Clive* was pleased, of his own mere motion, to let the Rajah hold it at *twenty* lacks, for the last year of it's being retained for the Company.—But, says Mr. *Verelst*, † “if this revenue was so extremely improveable, “ why did not Mr. *Bolts*, a Company's servant, resident upon the “ spot, one intrusted with the management, intimate his opinion to “ the Council?”—The writer's answer is extremely easy: although second in Council at *Bandras*, he was never consulted on the subject; while the country which had but just been taken, under a *solemn* treaty, in perpetuity for the Company, was as unexpectedly as suddenly given up by Lord *Clive*, and all the new stipulations finally executed with the utmost secrecy, before he knew a word of the matter, and before he had an opportunity of giving the Council any such intimations.

In the same page (21) Mr. *Verelst* farther says on this subject—
“ The estimate of Mr. *Bolts* is mentioned merely for the purpose of

* *Verelst's View*, &c. page 20.

† See the evidence of *Ralph Leycester*, Esq; one of the Deputies who concluded the treaty with the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah*, Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 305.

‡ *Verelst's View*, &c. page 21.



“ shewing his disposition to mislead. The situation of the Zemindary of *Bulwantsing* would have made it a burthen, and not an advantage to the Company, as the reader will fully understand in his further progress.”—Nevertheless, the Company were of an opinion so very different from Mr. *Verelst*, that in their * general letter to their Presidency at *Bengal*, of the 10th *April* 1771, the Directors appeared extremely solicitous to regain the territories of *Bulwantsing*, in exchange for the provinces of *Korah* and *Illahabad*, then held for the King; esteeming the political interests of the Company to be deeply interested in that event.

We will not follow Mr. *Verelst* in his attempt at wit, on the subject of *sudden transportation*, where he describes the † Governor of *Calcutta* as a rich tyrant without subjects; having *transported* all the inhabitants, and then bought their houses: because to shew attention to such matter, when employed to elude solid arguments on the most momentous concerns of mankind, would be equally to merit the reader’s contempt. But among the many imputations which the writer is said to have ‡ conveyed by the help of *Italicks* and large LETTERS, that concerning the sudden deaths of the Nabobs requires some notice.

Mr. *Verelst* says, “ If *Italicks* mean any thing, those Nabobs who died suddenly had their departure hastened by management.”—The writer declares that he did expressly mean to convey that idea, which, with respect to the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah*, was not only confirmed by the natives of the country, but had likewise reached the ears of || Directors. MUNNY BEGUM, the widow of the late Nabob *Asker Jaffer Ally Khawen*, who perhaps was as well versed in the intrigues of *Durbars* and *Seraglios* as Mr. *Verelst*, although his political enemy was at the head of the *Cast-cutcherry*, did herself also entertain strong suspicions on the same subject with respect to her children; as may be partly seen from her written § complaint to the Board of Revenue at the city.

* See parag. 47. Appendix A. page 257.

† *Verelst*’s View, &c. page 9.

‡ Ibid. page 10.

|| See the 11th paragraph of their letter of the 16th *March* 1768, Appendix A. Num. XXXVI. page 177.

§ See her complaint to the Board of Revenue at *Murshedabad*; wherein, although a *Mahimmedan*, in the anguish of her mind, she swears by our Saviour JESUS CHRIST that she would leave *Murshedabad* to go to the Committee. Appendix A. Num. XLVIII. page 245.



The deceptive *Musnud* of *Murshedabad*, circumscribed and insignificant as it had been rendered, from * “the penetrating inspections
“ that had been made by LORD CLIVE and MR. SYKES” for the
† “*unfledged Sovereigns*” who were placed in it, still afforded extensive prospects, with a variety of objects that might exercise the low ambition and avarice of such men as were stationed to support the deception. It is true, that the secret springs of such acquisitions as have been lately made at the *Durbar* can only be effectually traced in *Bengal*, and therefore have *not yet* been rendered quite perceptible to the public eye in this country. But the enormous fortunes which have been suddenly amassed there fully demonstrate the immensity of the advantages which still surrounded the *Musnud*; notwithstanding our author is pleased to assert, ‡ “it was impossible, consistently
“ with truth, to suggest a motive for the perpetration of so horrid
“ a crime.”

Unfortunately, no imputation can be conveyed, either in small or large letters; but if, in looking round, it be not directly applicable to himself, Mr. *Verehl* immediately suspects his intimates to be aimed at. On the subject of these sudden deaths he says, || “Left
“ the *Italics* should escape the reader’s attention, or as he might not
“ know against whom the insinuation was directed, LORD CLIVE
“ and MR. SYKES, in large letters, catch the eye.”

Mr. *Verehl*, who can speak experimentally on the sovereign worth of riches; who knows, as a celebrated author expresses himself, that they § “always procure protection for themselves, dazzle the eyes
“ of inquiry, divert the celerity of pursuit, and appease the ferocity
“ of vengeance;” must acknowledge, that for the eminency of their wealth, suddenly acquired, none deserve to be distinguished in more conspicuous characters than the gentlemen whom the writer hath mentioned. But it is not necessary to the subject of this chapter to

* *Vide Considerations, &c.* vol. I. page 47.

† *Dow’s Hindostan*, vol. III. page 89. “The Princes whom we raised in *Bengal* vanished imperceptibly from their thrones. Light and unsubstantial as the shew of power, with which, as in derision, we invested them, they disappeared, like *Romulus*, but without a storm. The benefits derived from former revolutions created a love of change; and the Angel of Death, if not our friend, was very opportune in his frequent visits to the *Musnud*. In the course of five years three Nabobs expired; and the unfledged Sovereign, who acceded to the nominal government of *Bengal* on the—March of 1770, has already enjoyed, considering the times, a long reign. Nabobs, to own the truth, are useless; and they are dismissed to their fathers without either ceremony or noise.”

‡ *Verehl’s View*, &c. page 11.

|| *Ibid.* page 10.

§ *Rambler*, vol. III. page 139.



enter upon the discussion of those honourable services to which Mr. *Verelst* alludes in the same * page. According to that gentleman's ideas of moral propriety, such actions as prove successful and lucrative must, of course, be honourable. Yet, however we may differ from our author, in characterizing, by very opposite epithets, such services as enabled a traitorous commander of a body of horse to dethrone, plunder, and murder his Prince, Mr. *Verelst* has made it necessary for the writer to acknowledge, in justice to the noble Lord and his *Durbar* Resident, that he did not mean to convey an imputation against any *European* whomsoever, for the *sudden deaths* alluded to in the first part of *Considerations*.

Not contented with injuriously endeavouring to bring upon the writer, the unmerited enmity of two such great men as Lord *Clive* and Mr. *Sykes*, Mr. *Verelst* thus farther attempts to entangle him in a dilemma on this subject. † “By concealing,” says he, “his suspicion during his residence in *Bengal*, subsequent to 1766, he incurs the guilt of an accomplice, whether the fact be TRUE or FALSE. If he entertained no suspicion, let the reader give a name to his present attempt.”

We will allow, that Mr. *Verelst* has made a great progress in academical studies since his return from *Bengal*; yet, without the display of a collegian, this ingenious dilemma might be resolved by asserting, in plain *English*, that had the writer published such suspicion during his residence in *Bengal*, SUBSEQUENT TO 1766, he himself would have been dispatched to the Nabob. But should the practice of the period alluded to may be justly censured, to give colour to such an assertion, yet, notwithstanding such appearances and suspicions, out of deference to the very high authorities that have established the fact, the writer must acknowledge, that the Nabob *Najim al Dowlah* died of a fever in his ‡ nose.

After enumerating various other crimes, which never existed, except in the brain of Mr. *Verelst*, when intoxicated with power and flattery, or disordered by the weight of a government, to which

* *Verelst's View*, &c. page 10.

† Ibid. page 11.

‡ See the Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. page 325.—“And your Committee find, by a letter from Mr. *Sykes*, to the Council at *Fort William*, dated 8th May 1766, that the Nabob died that day;—and by a letter from Lord *Clive* and General *Carnac*, to the Council, of the 9th May 1766—that he died of that sort of fever that affecteth the nose, and is generally supposed incurable.”



he was unequal, he thus proceeds in his charges against the writer.
 * “Nay, in an information delivered at the Quarter Sessions at
 “*Calcutta*, upon oath, he there denominates himself a *loyal sub-*
 “*ject* of *Great Britain*. Yet, when he is called upon, by the
 “*English East India Company*, to answer for an interference with
 “their exclusive trade in *India*, their zealous and devoted servant is
 “not ashamed to plead, that, as an *alien*, he is not the object of
 “those laws made for the protection and security of that Company
 “in whose service he went first to *India*.”

The nature of this plea of alienage, and the infamy of the prosecution which made it expedient, have been fully explained and exposed in pages 135 to 139. Although the writer never pretended to be a *natural-born* subject of *Great Britain*, he will insist, that during his temporary allegiance, he ever acted as a *loyal subject*, in the strictest sense of the words. There is, consequently, no such contradiction in this transaction as Mr. *Verelst* would insidiously infer; but, on the contrary, his having brought his complaint before the Quarter Sessions, as a *British* subject, should reflect the greatest honour on him in the eyes of every impartial man. It was meeting President *Verelst* and his Council upon their own strongest ground, when, by availing himself of his natural and unalienable birth-right, he might, in the first instance, have eluded all the chicane with which the charters and acts of parliament in favour of the Company, together with their own bye-laws, have, from their intricacy, absurdity, and repugnancy to other constitutional acts, hitherto enabled the Directors to baffle justice for any given number of years, when they find it convenient to support the iniquities of their servants in *India*. If, contrary to the laws of nations, the Governor and Council had not chosen to admit of the writer's residence in *Calcutta*, upon the same footing as other aliens, or denizens, yet, at any of the foreign settlements near *Calcutta*, he could have been received with open arms and honours, have evaded all the regulations made by them for the government of their own servants and dependants, and have set their malice at defiance.

But by the same destructive influence which, to the misfortune of the *East India* Proprietors, and of the nation, has *misdirected* the affairs of the Company for these ten years past; unfortunately also for the writer, every transaction in which he has been concerned,



however free from guilt, has been perpetually misrepresented. He has been blamed for actions which merited praise; and even the course of justice has been stopped, or perverted, for the sake of oppressing him; while every offer of such services to his late employers, as his small abilities put in his power, has been neglected, either from party-motives, or for no other reason than because such offer came from him. It was upon such principles that Mr. President *Verelst* rejected the writer's proposal of raising * fifteen thousand pounds *per annum*, clear profit, to the Company in *Bengal*, in the saltpetre trade, a branch which he the President had preferred making over to General *Smith* and Mr. *Claud Russell*. And, upon the same principle, have the *East India* Directors neglected to adopt the printing of the † *Bengal* language, a scheme that would have been of the utmost utility and profit in the revenue-department, and the only possible means of rendering a whole nation happy, by making them effectually acquainted with the new laws by which they were to be governed.

Having now gone through, and exposed the futility and malice of all Mr. *Verelst*'s charges, which were meant to affect the writer's public or private character, it may not be improper to take some notice of the ‡ climax of defamation with which that gentleman finishes his introductory chapter.

“ The Governor and Council were indeed criminal. It was criminal for a moment, to suffer the residence of a man, who, independent of other demerits, had corresponded with every rival, and every enemy of the Company; who had engaged with Mr. *Vernet*, the *Dutch* Governor to monopolize the cloth-trade of *Dacca*; who had scandalously evaded the execution of covenants, which, as a servant of the Company, he was bound to subscribe; who had attempted one, and actually succeeded in seducing another, inferior servant, to betray his trust, in delivering papers out of the office; who had, from his first arrival in *India*, carried on a trade destructive to the peace of the country; who, in support of this trade, had threatened the officers of the Nabob, and had issued his proclamation in the style of a Sovereign; whose agents, by their intrigues in the dominions of *Sujah al Dowlah*,

* Appendix E. Num. XXXII. page 375.

† Ibid., A. Num. LVIII. page 285; containing a specimen of the *Bengal* alphabet in the writer's new projected types.

‡ *Verelst*'s View, &c. pages 41 and 42.



“ and by false intelligence received from their *master*, had endangered the peace of *India*.”

As every one of the formidable accusations contained in this towering pyramid of exaggeration, so ornamented with exclamatory and declamatory flourishes, have been fully disproved, it will be thought sufficient, in this place, to declare them all to be infamously groundless and scandalous. Such general, vague accusations, therefore, without proof of guilt or injury, can only be considered as the impotent efforts of malice, to palliate the many gross acts of injustice and oppression which have been practised towards the writer.

This laboured section is thus concluded by Mr. *Verelst*'s writers :
 “ To suffer such a man in *Bengal*, was surely criminal. But if
 “ suits are now commenced in our Courts of Law, if petitions are
 “ presented to the House of Commons, and unwarrantable prejudices are industriously fomented, what might we expect, had
 “ ample justice been done to the Company and to the nation ?”

In answer to this bold appeal to public judgment in a matter of much moment, it may be said, that if it was criminal in the Governor and Council to suffer such a man as *Bolts* in *Bengal*, any guilt in them could only arise from notorious criminality in him. Why then was not that criminality judicially proved upon him in *Calcutta*, where there were competent Courts for that purpose, in which the all-powerful President *Verelst*, and his Council, would themselves have sat in judgment ? It was a duty they owed, to justice ; to their country ; to their employers, and to themselves.— That they did it not, was because they knew him to be guiltless, and that to have given even the shadow of justice to their conduct towards him, they must have continued the practice of the Select and Secret Committee, have become themselves the accusers and the judges, or have even counterfeited or forged facts, and then suborned or imprisoned witnesses for evidence, to substantiate the charges of their own creation.

Had the most ample justice been done to the Company and to the nation, either in *Bengal* or in *England*, government would not have been obliged to relinquish the 400,000 l. annual *hush-money*, nor to lend the Company a million and a half, to save them from a state of bankruptcy, to which they had been reduced by the very men who have now the confidence to insult their injured country with public vaunts of their able and faithful services ; and who, to



the reproach of national justice, have hitherto been suffered to continue unmolested in possession of their enormous spoil.

To the last paragraph contained in Mr. *Verelst*'s introduction it will suffice to reply, that nothing can be more evident than, from the facts which we have verified, that all abuses in the *Bengal* provinces, committed by unprotected people, could have been readily, effectually, and legally restrained, or punished; that, therefore, it is not to such persons that the ruinous state of those countries, or of the Company, could possibly be owing, but to the excessive abuses of men in power, and of those protected by them; with, at best, the gross ignorance, if not collusive connivance, of some leading Directors in *England*.—The public clearly see who have suddenly amassed immense wealth; and they have lately obtained new lights into the means by which it was acquired. They likewise behold the present state of the Company: against the evidence of which facts, all the powers of misrepresentation must and will continue to be fruitlessly exerted.

Under such persecutions as the writer laboured, and with such grounds for complaint, when the Court of Directors had not only refused him common justice, on the frequent applications he made to them, but even proceeded so far as daringly to render ineffectual the solemn decree of their Sovereign, by partially with-holding from him the invariably-used means for subsisting in the office of Alderman, to which he had been judicially restored; and while they exerted every engine of oppression to injure him in reputation and fortune:—what could remain to be done by him, or by others, in opposition to situations from the same abused powers, but what they did—~~to~~ appeal to the justice, to the power, and to the understanding of this nation?—What the result of their so doing has hitherto proved, Mr. *Verelst* exultingly feels, since, even parliamentary inquiries have neither served to criminate the complainants, to exculpate the accused, or to procure remedies to the evils complained of. And although such oppressions, as are a disgrace to the nation, have been proved to have been suffered in *Hindustan*, from the excesses of despotism and rapine, practised by the ruling servants of a commercial community, yet, from causes only to be surmized, have such flagrant offenders, not only hitherto escaped needful and exemplary justice, but even found advocates to vindicate their conduct.

With respect to the writer's particular case, he would have been more happy, if, from the nature of the *English* laws, six or seven
years



years had been found sufficient for obtaining legal decisions upon the suits and actions which he was forced to bring against his oppressors; as then judicial proofs would have been given of the facts which he has now submitted to public consideration: to the confusion of his enemies, the effectual vindication of his own character and conduct, and, eventually, to the doing of justice to his injured creditors. Yet, notwithstanding what he has suffered in mind, in fortune, and in his prospects in life, from the grossest injustice, and the unavoidable defects and delay of the law, he is happy that, after seven years persecution, he has been able to force Mr. *Verelst*, and his colleagues, from under the covering of their own flimsy disguises, to a plain discussion of facts before the public; who can now judge fairly of the contest of falshood against truth; between that gentleman and the writer.—He means not by any thing he hath related, to address the passions of his readers.—If the perusal of these sheets should conduce to animate those who have it in their power, to vindicate the injured reputation of *Great Britain*; and, divested of all national and party prejudices, to procure the establishment of such legal checks upon despotism in *India*, as shall in future secure the persons and properties of their fellow-creatures, and fellow-subjects, in those distant regions, effectually, from sustaining such wrongs as the writer hath laboured under; from which many through him have innocently suffered; and to which other persons are yet equally exposed: then will he consider his private losses and injuries as the sources of public benefits, and even think that the fruits of many years toil, in the whole of his fortune, have not been sacrificed, from the guilt of others, in vain.



C H A P. IX.

A VINDICATION of the Author, on the Subject of the MONOPOLY of SALT, BEETLENUT, and TOBACCO; established by the Right Honourable PRESIDENT and SELECT COMMITTEE of BENGAL, in the Year 1765.

HAVING written, in the first part of *Considerations on India Affairs*, a whole Chapter on the subject of the famous MONOPOLY of the trade in salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, established contrary to the intentions, and continued in defiance of the express orders of the *East India* Directors, by Lord Clive and the Select Committee at *Calcutta*, from the years 1765 to 1768, the writer will be cautious of troubling the public with repetitions on the same subject.—But, as Mr. *Verelst* has likewise appropriated a Chapter for the purposes of bold denial, or entire misrepresentation, with expressly impeaching the writer's veracity on this subject, in order to divert the public eye from such acts of a monopolizing and oppressive government as, from the enormity of their guilt, stand without precedent in the history of civilized nations, he hopes the public will excuse his replying thereto, as well for necessity as for correction of attempted deception, as in vindication of his character as a writer.

Mr. *Verelst* had great advantages on this head, from having free access to the Company's records. It was, therefore, fortunate for the writer, who had no such assistance, that after the publication of that gentleman's book, both the Secret and Select Committees of the Honourable House of Commons undertook to investigate the transactions of this salt-society, and have thereby amply furnished him with the means of his vindication.

The author of *Considerations*, &c. asserted, † that “the extraordinary shares of the profits of this public monopoly, to which the Select Committee gentlemen had helped themselves, were

* See the 4th report of the Secret Committee. Reports, vol. IV. pages 106, &c. and the 4th report of the Select Committee, vol. III. pages 461 to 471.

† *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 178.



“ not the only advantages they reaped from it. From the regu-
 “ lations which they, in their Select Committee, had previously
 “ agreed upon, they were first apprized of the sudden effects which
 “ those regulations could not fail of producing, in raising the price
 “ of salt all over the country. They therefore availed themselves
 “ of this fore-knowledge, and established a private society among
 “ themselves, for buying up as much as they could of the ready-
 “ made salt, which lay dispersed in different parts. Mr. *Verelst*,
 “ who conducted this separate concern, and was one of their Com-
 “ mittee, under the cloke usually assumed on such extraordinary
 “ occasions, of its being for the benefit of the Company’s affairs,
 “ was (at his own recommendation) appointed to a new and un-
 “ precedented employment, that of supervisor of the provinces of
 “ *Burdwân* and *Midnapore*, where great quantities of salt are pro-
 “ duced. This gave him an opportunity of associating himself
 “ with the junior servants under him at *Burdwân*, in a contract,
 “ for delivering to the Committee all the salt produced in that
 “ province; which he accordingly did, as may be seen in the copy
 “ of an indenture executed with the Committee on that occasion,
 “ inserted in the *Appendix*, Num. 42. page 151.”

“ The concerned in the said private society, which was very
 “ extensive in its operations, were the Right Honourable Lord
 “ *Clive*, *William Brightwell Sumner*, General *John Carnac*, *Harry*
 “ *Verelst*, and *Francis Sykes*, Esquires, as may be seen in Num.
 “ 43. of the *Appendix*, page 158; which is a copy of the ori-
 “ ginal indenture of the assignment executed by his Lordship, on
 “ his selling his own shares in the public and private societies.”

As Mr. *Verelst* has industriously evaded answering a word on these subjects, we shall take the liberty of transcribing a few extracts from the records of the Honourable House of Commons, as they stand in the reports of the Select Committee already quoted.

* “ Having thus stated the orders of the Court of Directors,
 “ your Committee think proper to observe, that the salt-society,
 “ which afterwards took place, appears to have been originally pro-
 “ posed at sea by Lord *Clive*, during his passage to *India*; and the
 “ evidence upon which your Committee ground this fact, is a let-
 “ ter from Lord *Clive* to the Court of Directors, dated the 1st Fe-
 “ bruary 1766.

* Reports, vol. III. page 462.



“ And it appears to your Committee, from the evidence of several witnesses here following, that in the beginning of *June*, being a few days after the arrival of Mr. *Verelst* from *Chittigong*, and about the time of the third meeting of the Select Committee, a private partnership was formed, in the names of Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Sumner*, Mr. *Verelst*, and Mr. *Sykes*, for purchasing large quantities of salt, then in the hands of private merchants. Your Committee are prevented stating the extent of this transaction so fully as they might otherwise have done, by Mr. *Verelst* declining to answer a question put to him upon that subject; because, as he alleged, the Court of Directors had threatened him with a prosecution upon salt-concerns, &c. &c.

* “ Mr. *Sumner* being examined upon the subject of the above-mentioned partnership, informed your Committee, that, some time in the month of *June* 1765, Mr. *Verelst* mentioned to him his having made some purchases of old salt upon his own account, and, at the same time, proposed his taking a share therein, together with Lord *Clive* and Mr. *Sykes*, which the witness agreed to; that each of them had a quarter-part, and that Mr. *Verelst* undertook the management of the concern, and the keeping of the accounts; that the witness sold his quarter to Mr. *Verelst*, about the middle of *September*, for a certain profit; that he had at this time advanced his whole share of the money required for the purchase, amounting to £ 12,500, &c. &c.

† “ Your Committee then examined *Francis Sykes*, Esq; a member of the House; who being asked, whether he remembered any partnership between himself, Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Sumner*, and Mr. *Verelst*? said, That a quantity of salt was purchased by them, the time he could not recollect, but he believed it might about two months after their arrival; that the said salt was bought of many black people, and many *English* gentlemen; Mr. *John Johnson*, Mr. *Hastings*’s attornies, and others; that they bought it on their own private accounts, and that it was salt manufactured the year before their arrival. Being asked, why they dealt themselves in salt, before they had proceeded to regulate the trade? he said, *He did not know that they did*, previous to their entering on the subject, or to the intention being publicly known; that this partnership-salt was not sold to the society,

“ Reports, vol. III. page 463.

† *Ibid.*



“ *but to the country people* ; that the gentlemen concerned were
 “ drawn upon for money agreeably to their shares ; that the wit-
 “ nesses’s proportion was about a lack of rupees ; that the advan-
 “ tages of the said partnership, to those who continued their con-
 “ cern, reckoning loss of interest and balances, might be thirty *per*
 “ *cent.*—He said, that he did not recollect who made the proposal
 “ to Lord *Clive* relating to this partnership, but that his Lordship
 “ was not concerned in it from the beginning ; that it was begun
 “ by Mr. *Verelst* that the witnesses afterwards *accepted* a concern,
 “ and that, some time after, Lord *Clive* and Mr. *Sumner* did the
 “ same. And being asked, whether Lord *Clive* entered into this
 “ partnership upon his own account, or for the benefit of other
 “ persons ? he said, He remembered very well, that at the time
 “ Lord *Clive* took the concern, he declared he would not benefit
 “ himself six-pence by it ; that he intended the profits which might
 “ arise from it, for Mr. *Strachey*, Mr. *Muskelyne*, and Mr. *Ingham*,
 “ the surgeon, the three gentlemen who had accompanied him to
 “ *India, &c. &c.*

So far, the parties concerned have themselves established the veracity of the author of *Considerations, &c.* But the point which Mr. *Verelst* and his friends have found hardest of digestion, was the deed of indemnity exhibited by the writer, whereby the noble Lord and his Council engaged, under an immense penalty, to keep up and enforce the continuance of the exclusive trade in salt, *notwithstanding any orders of the Court of Directors to the contrary*, and to save harmless, and indemnify the Committee of Trade, who were entrusted with the concerns of the society, from the consequences of such disobedience.

The subterfuges of Mr. *Verelst* to this proof against them, are like the wily doublings of an old fox at the last gasp. But it is impossible to do justice to that gentleman’s dexterity, without transcribing the whole passage in his own words, which are as follow :

* “ A wonderful discovery is now made of a deed, an unheard-
 “ of engagement among the Company’s servants, to support each
 “ other in a predetermined disobedience of orders. If those who
 “ so readily adopt this opinion, had consulted the Company’s re-
 “ cords for information, and not to serve a present purpose, they
 “ would probably have read the whole relative to the subject, and
 “ might, in such case, have found every particular entered at large

* *Verelst’s View*, page 111.



“ among the proceedings of the Council, 16th *September* 1765, and
 “ transmitted to the Directors in the general letter.

“ The plan being formed, and shares of the society distributed
 “ among the Company’s servants, according to their respective
 “ rank, the conduct of this trade was entrusted to a Committee,
 “ chosen for that purpose, who proceeded to make many contracts
 “ for salt. But it was soon found impossible, without the concur-
 “ rence of the Council, “ to establish the credit of the society, so
 “ as to raise the necessary fund for carrying on the trade.” The
 “ Committee of Trade, therefore, request a deed in writing to se-
 “ cure to them this trade during the year, ending 31st of *August*
 “ 1766.

“ Had the Directors thought fit to send retrospective orders for
 “ the abolition of this society, erected with the previous assent of
 “ themselves and their constituents, such orders could not arrive in
 “ *Bengal* before the year was expired. The Council, therefore,
 “ unanimously resolved to indemnify the Committee of Trade, in
 “ an engagement undertaken upon the faith of the Company ; and
 “ as the *Admiral Stevens* was not yet dispatched, “ it is agreed to
 “ apply to the Company for permission to renew the same for the
 “ future concerns, *if the plan meets with their approbation.*” By this
 “ deed, the Committee of Trade became personally responsible for
 “ the duties to the Company ; the Council, on the other hand,
 “ engaging to continue the society during one year. So little idea
 “ of guilt was entertained, that *none of the gentlemen concerned have*
 “ *ever kept a copy* ; but the original deed was drawn by Mr. * *Whit-*
 “ *all*, whom Mr. *Bolts* supposes to have been cruelly oppressed,
 “ by the same men who entrusted him with this very dangerous
 “ conspiracy. Mr. *Bolts* knew the transaction would not bear the
 “ construction he wished it to receive. He therefore makes *ano-*
 “ *ther* † *deed*, the date of which is suppressed, to precede this in

* In a note upon this name, Mr. *Verelst* says, “ Mr. *Whitall*, an attorney of the
 “ Mayor’s Court, was directed to draw out the deed ; and the letter of the Commit-
 “ tee of Trade, and resolution thereupon, which appear in consultations, were trans-
 “ mitted to him, as instructions for forming the same. What *this friend* of Mr. *Bolts*
 “ *may have added, before or since*, it is impossible for those to say who have no copy of
 “ the deed.”

† Upon this word also, Mr. *Verelst* has the following note : “ This deed was executed
 “ more than twelve months after the other ;” alluding to the deed given in Appendix to
 “ *Considerations*, vol. I. page 158, which was only a copy of Lord *Criue*’s private deed of sale
 “ of his share of the salt, in partnership with Messrs. *Sumner*, *Verelst*, and *Sykes*, and had
 “ no connexion with the deed of indemnity, now under our consideration.

“ his



“ his Appendix, because it would otherwise have proved, that a
 “ disobedience of orders had never been in contemplation of the
 “ parties. This deed, relating to a period, within which orders
 “ were expected to arrive from home, plainly supposes such orders
 “ would be obeyed, for it contains an express stipulation in a par-
 “ ticular private contract upon this event, “ that if any order or
 “ direction shall be issued by the honourable Court of Directors of
 “ the *East India* Company in *England*, by which the said joint-trade
 “ in salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, shall be stopped, &c.” It was
 “ not, therefore, the private intention of these gentlemen to dis-
 “ obey, much less would they have set forth such intention upon
 “ the public records of the Company, if they had ever entertained
 “ the thought.”

The reader here sees that Mr. *Verelst* has recourse to the stratagem of representing the transaction to have been no secret, and that every particular was entered at large among the proceedings of the Council transmitted to the Directors. To have the appearance of a support for his bold assertions, he refers * to the consultations of the 16th *September* 1765, whereon is recorded a letter from the Committee of Trade, consisting only of four members, whereof the copartners, Messrs. *Sumner* and *Verelst*, make two, requesting a deed from the President and Council at large, then consisting of themselves, with the addition of General *Carnac*, and the copartners Mr. *Francis Sykes* and Lord *Clive*, to secure to the proprietors, whom they had been pleased to enrol on their list, the exclusive trade in salt, in the mode in which it had been just established by themselves.

On reference to those proceedings, in the † Reports of the House of Commons, it will appear, that every material circumstance is therein cautiously suppressed, while from the words of the minute on their said Records, the reader is left with an impression that *something* was doing agreeable to the honourable Company's orders or intentions.—Nevertheless, the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, ‡ “ having inquired whether the said deed was trans-
 “ mitted to the Court of Directors, they find, by the evidence of
 “ § Mr. *Michell* and Mr. *Wilks*, that though an account thereof

* *Verelst's* Appendix, page 249.

† Reports, vol. IV. page 184.

‡ Ibid. page 107.

§ The Secretary, and one of his deputies at the *India-house*.



“ was sent, in the manner before-mentioned, it doth not appear in
 “ the books and correspondence of the Company, that the said *deed*
 “ *was ever transmitted to the Court of Directors;*” whose orders, or
 intentions, the parties were, in fact, at that time solemnly engag-
 ing to set at defiance.

Left Mr. *Verelst* should fail in his evidence of the openness of this
 transaction, and of its strict conformity to the Company’s orders,
 the reader will further perceive, on collating that gentleman’s notes
 with the text, that the author of *Considerations, &c.* is supposed to
 have conspired with the attorney who drew the original deed, in
 forging the transcript that was exhibited to the public in that work,
 of which *the innocent gentlemen concerned, unconscious of guilt, had not*
even preserved a copy.

To detect these ambidextrous tricks of the ingenious Mr. *Verelst*,
 we must again crave the reader’s indulgence for transcribing the
 further evidence given on this subject, from the Report of the
 Select Committee of the House of Commons, which was as
 follows :

* “ Your Committee proceeded next to inquire into the nature
 “ of the deed mentioned in the former part of this Report, and also
 “ in the Report of the Committee of Secrecy, to have been soli-
 “ cited by the Committee of Trade, on the 16th *September 1765,*
 “ and into the transactions respecting the same.

“ And your Committee examined Mr. *Richard Whittall;* who
 “ being asked, If he knew any thing of a deed to protect the salt-
 “ trade, and to indemnify the Committee of Trade?—he said,
 “ He was a sworn attorney of the Mayor’s Court at *Calcutta;* that
 “ in *October 1765, Mr. Verelst applied to him, and gave him instruc-*
 “ *tions to prepare a deed of indemnity from the President and Council of*
 “ *Benegal to the Committee of Trade;* that he accordingly drew one
 “ up, and which upon being shewn to Mr. *Verelst,* he having
 “ made some alterations, approved of it; that the witness after-
 “ wards laid a fair copy of it before the Governor and Council for
 “ their approbation; that by direction of the board he made some
 “ further alterations and additions in his own hand, and engrossed
 “ it, and delivered it to Mr. *Lawrell,* the Secretary to the Com-
 “ mittee of Trade; that about ten days afterwards he waited on
 “ Mr. *Lawrell,* who desired him to fill up the penalty, and alter
 “ the date, which was the 11th of *September,* to some subsequent



“ day, to make it consistent with the other deed from the society
 “ to the Committee of Trade; the date of which had been altered,
 “ before execution, from the 12th of *August* to the 18th *September*:
 “ and being asked, If he could speak with certainty as to any time
 “ posterior to which the deed referred to must have been executed,
 “ supposing it was ever executed? He said, That in the begin-
 “ ning of *November* he rented another house, where he was very
 “ certain both the deeds referred to were engrossed; and the seal
 “ which the deed from the society to the Committee of Trade was
 “ sealed with, he had from the owner of that house after he went
 “ into it; that, to the best of his remembrance, he delivered both
 “ deeds to the Secretary about the middle of *November*, about ten
 “ days after which he altered the date, and filled up the blank for
 “ the penalty; that he was, therefore, induced to believe it must
 “ be the end of *November*, or beginning of *December*, before either
 “ of them were executed. And being asked, If he had ever seen
 “ either of them after they were executed? He said, In *September*
 “ 1766 he waited on Lord *Clive*, to receive instructions to prepare
 “ another deed; when his Lordship informed him, that he had
 “ been perusing those two deeds, and which were then laying before
 “ him on the table; that his Lordship observed to him, that there
 “ was not any valuable consideration expressed, and asked him, If
 “ he thought them valid? That he said, He could not ascertain
 “ how far they were valid in law, but that he had prepared them
 “ agreeable to the instructions he had received. And being asked,
 “ If he was sure the deed, if ever executed, must have been exe-
 “ cuted after the 15th *October*? He said, He was positive of it.
 “ And being asked, with what sum the blank for the penalty was
 “ filled up? He said, He believed 300,000 l. and that Lord *Clive*
 “ talked of those deeds to him as deeds executed. And being
 “ asked, Whether he had any instructions to keep this transaction
 “ secret? He said, He had not; but that he never did mention it
 “ to any body but Mr. *Banks*, which was in the year 1769; that
 “ he did not mention it, because he thought it was a matter that
 “ should not be made public, from the nature of the transaction,
 “ it being an agreement to carry on a trade contrary to the orders
 “ of the Company. And being asked, What were his motives
 “ for mentioning it to Mr. *Banks*, after keeping it secret for three
 “ years? He said, That talking to Mr. *Banks*, whom he esteemed
 “ his friend, about a contract he had made for the Committee of
 “ Trade, he mentioned it in common conversation. And being
 “ asked,



“ asked, When, and on what occasion, he first mentioned the deed
 “ in *England*? He said, That he mentioned it soon after his arrival,
 “ which was in *November* 1770, because he thought it ought to be
 “ made public, and that he was not bound in honour to keep it
 “ secret; that he first spoke of it to Mr. *Bolts*, and in *December*
 “ 1771, was called before the Court of Directors to be examined
 “ about it. The copy of the rough draft of the deed produced
 “ by Mr. *Whittall*, as referred to in the above evidence, is here-
 “ unto annexed, Num. 63.”

* “ Then *William Brightwell Sumner*, Esquire, being asked, If he
 “ knew any thing of a deed entered into between the Governor and
 “ Council, and Committee of Trade; to ensure the carrying on
 “ the salt-society for one year? Said, That such a deed was en-
 “ tered into; the express terms of the deed he did not recollect;
 “ but he said, he considered it as an engagement on the part of the
 “ Proprietors, to pay to the Company certain stipulated duties;
 “ and on the part of the Governor and Council, to secure to the
 “ Proprietors the carrying on that trade for the space of one year,
 “ or to save and bear them harmless. Being asked, Whether any
 “ mention was made of that deed by the Governor and Council
 “ upon record? He referred your Committee to the consultations
 “ 16th *September* 1765, and to the 40th and 41st paragraphs of the
 “ letter from the Governor and Council to the Court of Directors,
 “ dated the 30th of *September* 1765, (copies of which are annexed
 “ in the Appendix to the former † Report of this Committee.)
 “ And Mr. *Sumner* being asked, Whether the deed, which he had
 “ formerly said was executed, was drawn up by Mr. *Whittall*? He
 “ answered in the affirmative.

“ Some days after the above examination, *Henry Strachey*, Esq;
 “ a member of the Committee, produced a paper, which he said
 “ he believed to be a copy of the deed of indemnity to protect the
 “ society of the salt-trade: That he ordered a copy to be made
 “ when he was in *Bengal* in 1766, or *January* 1767; that the
 “ paper is in the hand-writing of Mr. *William Hippisley Coxe*, who
 “ was in his ‡ office at that time, as to the body of it; and that
 “ the names of the contracting parties subscribed to it, and the
 “ indorsement, are in the hand-writing of Mr. *William Wynne*, who
 “ was also an assistant in his office; and that he believed it to be

* Reports, vol. III. page 471.

† Ibid. page 388.

‡ As private Secretary to Lord *Clinch*.



“ the copy he so ordered to be made. And being asked, When
 “ he found that that copy was in his possession? He replied, A
 “ few weeks ago, but could not say exactly. And being asked, If
 “ he could say, that the deed was executed before the 15th of
 “ *October* 1765? He said, He did not know when it was executed.
 “ And your Committee have also annexed a copy of the said deed
 “ produced by Mr. *Strachey*, Num. 64.”

“ Your Committee having thus stated all the circumstances they
 “ have been able to collect respecting the deed of indemnity in
 “ 1765, they think proper to remark, that by a letter from the
 “ Committee of Trade, dated the 15th of *July* 1767, entered in
 “ general consultations of the 27th of the same month, it appears,
 “ that a second deed of indemnity must have been entered into
 “ with the Committee of Trade for that year, *viz.* Messrs. *Cartier*,
 “ *Russell*, *Aldersey*, and *Ffloyer*; but no such deed has appeared
 “ before your Committee, nor can they discover any traces of it in
 “ the records of the Company.”

The copy of the deed above referred to, as produced by Mr. *Strachey*, contains the express words on which the charge of disobedience is founded; and differs in no material circumstance from that exhibited by the author of *Considerations*, except the penal sum, which in Mr. *Strachey*'s copy is filled up with eight lacs of current rupees.—But for the further satisfaction of the curious reader, on the subject of this salt-monopoly, and the disobedience of the Select Committee to the orders of the Directors, we beg leave to refer him to a general view * of the proceedings, held both in *England* and in *Bengal* relative to this business, as drawn up from the records of the Company, by an old and able servant of their own.—He will therein perceive, that after the receipt of repeated orders from the Directors, for the abolition of this salt-monopoly, it was, nevertheless, “ *kept up, continued, and enforced*,” agreeably to the engagements in the respective bonds of indemnity; and even *after the faith of the Calcutta government had been repeatedly pledged to the natives, by public resolutions and advertisements, for abolishing the society*, and encouraging them to embark again in the salt-trade.

In the further discussion of the subject of our present consideration, we cannot but expose the great reluctance with which the members of the Select Committee relinquished this their most fa-

* Appendix A. Num. XLVI. page 229.



vourite of all monopolies, and the hypocrisy which they practise, when no subterfuge was left them for evading the Company's orders.

They had already, in *September* 1765, acknowledged, that the * interest of the Nabob, with regard to salt, was no longer concerned, as the whole of the duties belonged to the Company, who † possessing territorial jurisdiction, and having become the ‡ Sovereigns of a rich and potent kingdom, were not only the collectors, but the proprietors of the revenues, while the || Nabob's power was kept up only in appearance. In short, they had, as hath been before shewn, in the most express terms acknowledged the fact, that they had transferred all power to themselves, and that there existed no other government in *Bengal*.

Yet forgetful of what they had so lately written, in their letter dated *Calcutta* the 24th *January* 1767, Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Verelst*, General *Carnac*, and Mr. *Sykes* set forth the evils that would accrue from restoring the former freedom of this trade, in the following words: § “ We are now directed totally to renounce all share in and
“ benefit arising from this trade; it must be made over to the na-
“ tives; THE GOVERNMENT *must of course come into possession*; nor
“ can it be carried on otherwise than upon the ancient footing of
“ farming it out to ministers, officers, favourites, and dependants on
“ *the Government*, who will rear immense fortunes upon the oppres-
“ sion and ruin of the Public, *in despite of our utmost influence and en-
“ deavours.*”

The intervention of six months having obliterated the recollection of that unavoidable ruin and oppression which were denounced in this letter, the Resident at the *Durbar*, in *August* 1767, ¶ transmitted to the Select Committee the outline of a plan for putting the making and the selling of all the salt produced in *Bengal* under the direction and management of the Nabob's officers. The profits, which under the monopoly had been divided into sixty shares, might have been thereby distributed among “ *the ministers and officers of* THE GO-
“ VERNMENT;” a scheme which appeared so glaring that it was
“ *chiefly,*” if not wholly, on that account rejected by the Committee, who now gave it as their opinion, that * “ *justice required the privi-*

* Reports, vol. III. page 523.

† Lord *Clive*'s Letter to the Directors of the 30th *September* 1765.

‡ Select Committee's Letter to the Directors of the 30th *Sept.* 1765, par. 29 and 38.

|| Ibid.

§ Reports, vol. III. page 527.

¶ See Appendix A. Num. XXVIII. page 160.

• Appendix A. page 161.



“ *lege of making salt should be restored to those persons who formerly de-
 “ rived their subsistence from it, and who had no other means of providing
 “ for their families.*”

About the very same period of time, when the Court of Directors were framing their orders for restoring this trade to the natives, the noble projector of the monopoly, anxiously solicitous to persuade them to relinquish their design, and confirm the trade to the Select Committee as before, boldly represented to the Court, that “ the
 “ natives, having never enjoyed the advantages they proposed to
 “ give them, would be *astonished* at so unexpected and extraordinary
 “ an indulgence.” Among other arguments equally *ingenious* and *satisfactory*, which may be seen at large in his letters to the Directors of the 28th *August* and 14th *November* 1767, his Lordship † urged, that it would be a convenient means for rewarding the servants and shutting the door to the solicitations of Noblemen to provide for the younger branches of their families; which he represented as a measure that might be apprehended, if rewards were bestowed from a commission granted either upon the Company’s investment or their revenues.

But the same noble Lord, who had thus recommended a plan to exclude the sons of the Nobility, was the first man who had dealt largely to himself a commission of one and one-eighth *per cent.* upon those ‡ revenues, amounting to near thirty thousand pounds *per annum*: and President *Verelst*, who by repeated advertisements had pretended to abolish the monopoly; who by public edicts had invited the natives to the making of salt; and who on the 2d *September* 1767 had acknowledged that justice required the privilege of making salt should be restored to those natives who had been deprived of the means of providing subsistence for their families; was the same gentleman who, in *August* 1768, severely reprimanded || *Mahommed Reza Khawon*, for having, even then, permitted the Fowzdar of *Hoogly* to suffer the native merchants to remove their salt; alleging that the Committee’s term was not yet expired.

† Reports, vol. III. pages 528 and 529.

‡ Appendix A. page 237.

|| Ibid. B Num. XXV. XXVI. and XXVII. pages 297 and 298. It was in consequence of such orders as are here referred to, that the poor inhabitants had their salt washed away, as related in a note to *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. pages 201 and 202; on which occasion the writer had seen above two hundred of the salt-makers surrounding the Governor’s palanqueen on the high road, and falling prostrate on their faces before him, to induce him to suffer the removal of their salt, before it was washed away.

Having



Having now sufficiently exposed the hypocrisy, and fixed the proof of the disobedience and interested combinations practised among the members of the self-praising and self-denying Committee of Reformers, at *Calcutta*, it becomes necessary to examine a few other circumstances attending this extraordinary establishment.

For the purpose of imposing a belief, that this monopoly, as conducted by the *pious* Committee, had been really a benefit to the natives, it is asserted by Mr. *Vereist*, that * “ Mr. *Sumner*, who was “ indefatigable in adjusting every part of the plan, actually *searched* “ about twenty years back ; and the price was, in consequence of “ this research, fixed at the several markets, to which the society “ transported salt, full fifteen *per cent.* lower than the price at which “ it usually sold. From these markets it was carried by the natives, “ so that the consumer must purchase his salt for less than had been “ ordinarily given.”

† “ A difficulty will here occur to the mind of the reader : how “ could the salt be sold at the usual price, when the Company and “ Proprietors received each a profit ?”

To reconcile this difficulty, much labour is taken by Mr. *Vereist*, in the same page, to impose a belief, that during the former state of the salt-trade, from the heavy duties which the Nabob's officers collected, the extortions they practised, and the vexatious delays which they occasioned, the native merchants were much worse off than under the administration of the Select Committee. In further support of this paradox, a quotation is likewise given from a pamphlet published by Mr. *Archibald Keir*, when he was soliciting to return to *India*, to execute the plan proposed in his publication, for an *assize* on salt. From this pamphlet Mr. *Vereist* has selected the complimentary opinion of that gentleman, ‡ that the society for the trade in

* *Vereist's View*, page 113.

† *Ibid.* page 114.

‡ *Ibid.* page 115. Mr. *Vereist* hath not given a faithful quotation from Mr. *Keir*, whose words are as follow : “ After all, however, on the most cool and impartial reflection, I do not think, that the monopoly, as instituted by Lord *Clive* and the Select Committee, was so detrimental and ruinous to the country as has been asserted ; nay, “ I am rather of a contrary opinion ; for those articles were not only not sold dearer, but, “ indeed, at a lower rate, during the monopoly, at most places at least, than, at a medium, had been done for many years before ; while there was a fixed price upon them, “ which, no doubt, would have been of advantage to the people, had it been continued, “ particularly with regard to salt. As to the propriety or impropriety of the Company's “ allowing such a monopoly, and so great a revenue to their servants, it is foreign to my “ purpose to inquire into it here.” See *Thoughts on the Affairs of Bengal*, by *Archibald Keir*, Esq; 1772, page 57.



salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, instituted by Lord *Clive* and the Select Committee, was so far from being detrimental to the country, that those articles were sold at a lower rate, during the monopoly, than they had been for many years.—Then follows a long and perplexed detail of the prices of salt at different places, before the establishment of the society in question : at which period, according to Mr. *Sumner's* estimate, that article is said to have been known at *Patna* as high as seven hundred rupees *per* hundred maunds.

We are not informed where Mr. *Sumner* searched for his information, nor do we know any period, previous to the establishment of the society, when salt sold at *Patna* for seven rupees *per* maund, except one, and that was when the Nabob himself, by way of making a present to the Chief of the *English* factory, took off all his salt at a very high price, and, to indemnify himself, caused it afterwards to be resold, at even an advanced rate, to the natives. If Mr. *Sumner's* medium-prices were formed upon such *data*, we need not be surprised that Mr. *Verelst* has cautiously avoided to exhibit a copy of the estimate ; which, we will venture to pronounce, would, in no circumstances whatever, warrant the conclusion drawn by that gentleman.

With respect to the duties and exactions, Mr. *Vansittart*, who took great pains to collect information on that subject, upon his journey up the country, when he settled the treaty with the Nabob *Cossim Ally Khawn*, reckons the regular or legal duties on salt from *Calcutta* to *Patna* at fifteen *per cent.* and, with all the exactions on the way, at something better than twenty-five rupees * *per* hundred maunds. This was during the reign of as tyrannic a Nabob as ever sat on the *Musnud* ; and Mr. *Verelst* acknowledges †, that by the society's plan in 1765 a duty of thirty-five *per cent.* and by the plan of the year 1766, a duty of fifty *per cent.* was levied for the Company.

Having had as extensive dealings in salt as Mr. *Sumner* or Mr. *Keir*, the writer may be very justly excused from giving up his knowledge of that business to the opinions of either of those gentlemen. But as

* See *Vansittart's* Narrative, vol. II. page 414. “ By all the informations I could get on this subject, I find, that from this place to *Patna* the King's duties are collected on salt at six different places, viz. *Hogly* ; *Murshedabad*, or *Jellinguee* ; *Ragemahl* ; *Canragolab* ; *Baghelpoor* ; and, finally, the *Dewanee*-duty, upon the sales at *Patna*. The amount of these, reckoned at the lowest of the several informations I took, was more than twenty-five rupees *per* hundred maunds ; or if we reckon them at what is said to be the regular King's duties, at every place where duties are collected, that is, two and a half *per cent.* the amount will be fifteen *per cent.*”

† *Verelst's* View, note, page 116.



Mr. *Vereist* has chosen to quote Mr. *Keir*'s pamphlet, we will also avail ourselves of the same evidence for confuting of both our author and his favourite authority.

According to Mr. *Keir* (page 75 of his pamphlet) the original price paid by him, at the pans, to the salt-boilers, was for every * 100 maunds, *Arcot* rupees

| Rupees | Annas | Pice |
|--------|-------|------|
| 25 | 0 | 0 |

The charges and risk of carrying it to *Patna*, with which, he says (page 76) he is well acquainted, he estimates at 6 annas *per* maund, but thinks it may be done for less. At that rate the hundred maunds will cost

| | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 37 | 8 | 0 |
| <hr/> | | |
| 62 | 8 | 0 |

Mr. *Keir* further says (page 77) “ that where boats “ are good, and the people really honest, there will “ not be a loss of two *per cent.* in the whole transport “ of it to *Patna* :” but to avoid cavil, let us admit it to be

| | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 5 | 0 | 0 |
| <hr/> | | |
| 67 | 8 | 0 |

Now let us take Mr. *Vanfittart*'s estimate at 25 rupees *per* 100 maunds, for the duties, exactions, and extortions on the road, during the government of the most tyrannic Nabob ; or, to avoid a cavil, let us even take the rate established by Lord *Clive* and the Select Committee of *Calcutta*, during the last year of their monopoly, which was 50 *per cent.* valuing the 100 maunds at 90 rupees. This gives us the sum of .

| | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 45 | 0 | 0 |
| <hr/> | | |
| 112 | 8 | 0 |

And, next let us allow for unforeseen petty charges not herein provided for, and for a reasonable profit to the merchant, largely, in the sum of

| | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 37 | 8 | 0 |
| <hr/> | | |
| 150 | 0 | 0 |
| <hr/> | | |

* For the satisfaction of such readers as may be desirous of conviction from their own calculations, it may be necessary to premise, that the rupee called *Arcot*, upon which this computation is founded, is supposed to be worth two shillings and four pence. The subdivisions of a rupee are, each rupee 16 annas, and each anna 12 pice. The maund is estimated at 80 pounds avoirdupoize ; and it's subdivisions are, each maund 40 seers, and each seer 16 chittacks.



We have then the sum of one hundred and fifty rupees for the hundred maunds, or one rupee and a half for the price at which each maund of salt might be afforded to be sold, by a reasonable merchant, at * *Patna*; where, according to Mr. *Sumner's* estimate of the medium-prices, calculated to justify the institution of the monopoly, it was found to have been, before the establishment of the society, at seven rupees *per* maund: and where, according to Mr. *Verelst*†, the highest price, after that establishment, was four rupees *per* maund.

This calculation from Mr. *Keir*, of the cost of salt, transported from the pans to *Patna*, will obviate what Mr. *Verelst* objects, that ‡ “ Mr. *Bolts* seems to have formed all his estimates upon the price “ which salt bore at *Calcutta*, without making any allowance for the “ advantages which the interior country experienced.”—Nevertheless, it will be difficult to assign a reason that shall be satisfactory to a rational merchant, why the price at *Calcutta* should not be taken as the only basis whereon to calculate the rates at which salt might be afforded at all other inland markets; seeing that *Calcutta* had become the capital city, port, and emporium of the provinces, for salt and every other commodity. But when it is farther considered, that the President and Council of *Calcutta* were not only become the uncontrolled legislators to regulate the duties, but also the executive magistrates, if they pleased, to prevent abuses in the collection of them, this objection of Mr. *Verelst* will be found to consist of nothing but words, without a meaning.

The only error which the Author of *Considerations* hath committed, in treating upon this monopoly, is, his having estimated the amount thereby collected from the natives of *Bengal* at || 673,117*l.*—whereas, by lights which he hath since acquired, he finds it should at least be rated at double that sum.—It is notorious, that in the years 1753 and 1754 *Cogee Hazeed*, whose example the noble Lord hath § quoted as an authority for the justification of his establishment, sold his salt in *Calcutta* at from *forty* to *fifty* rupees *per* hundred maunds, as can be proved by several gentlemen now in *England*. It is also well known, that Mr. *Sumner*, whose indefatigable researches have been ap-

* It appears by a letter of Mr. *Robert Maldison*, late *Persian* Translator to Mr. *Verelst*, that even in *January* 1769, while the effects of the monopoly still prevailed, that gentleman could transport salt to *Patna* which did not stand him in above one rupee fourteen annas *per* maund, expenses included. See Appendix A. page 193.

† View of *Bengal*, note, page 117.

‡ Ibid. page 116.

|| *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 188.

§ Reports, vol. III. page 529, and Lord *Clive's* speech 30th *March* 1772, page 23.



pealed to by Mr. *Vereist*, as a sanction for the very low prices established by the Committee, had himself, in the year 1758, extensive dealings in salt, which he purchased at *thirty-five* rupees *per* hundred maunds : and, upon an examination of the books of the Government at *Hoogly*, in the year 1764, the whole of the duties there collected on salt appeared never to have exceeded fifty thousand pounds sterling *per annum*. Unless, therefore, no ideas can be affixed to words, or truths cannot be deduced from facts and arithmetical computations, we may safely defy any man to justify the establishment of the monopoly under consideration.—The very attempt is an insult on common sense ; nor can a better argument ever be offered in its support, than that which was given, with so great applause and success, by the noble monopolist, in his own justification before the Commons of *Great Britain*, drawn from the abundant abilities of the poor natives to pay the Committee-prices for their salt, from their abstinence and parsimony in their food, apparel, and edifices. His Lordship's words were as follow :

* “ The lowest wages in *Bengal* are two rupees a month, which is
 “ twenty-four rupees, or three pounds *per annum*.—The poor can
 “ scarcely be said to be at any other expence than for eating :—they
 “ drink nothing but water—they wear no cloaths—their houses are
 “ built with mud or clay, thatched with straw.—Now I leave the
 “ House to judge, whether the expence of from fifteen pence to two
 “ shillings and sixpence a year for twenty pounds of salt, even to
 “ these, the very poorest of the inhabitants, can be a grievance ?”

* Lord *Clive*'s speech 30th *March* 1772, page 22.



CHAP. X.

ON the INCONSISTENCY of CONDUCT, INIQUITOUS DECEPTIONS, and INTERESTED ABUSES of AUTHORITY, of the late PRESIDENTS and MEMBERS of the SELECT COMMITTEES of BENGAL; and on their LAVISH PROFUSION of the PROPERTY of the PUBLIC.

NOTWITHSTANDING every other part of this work furnishes a variety of facts in proof of such iniquities as are the immediate objects of our *Considerations* under the present head, it was found impossible to do justice to our subject without setting a-part a distinct Chapter for the purpose of collecting together a few other facts not elsewhere discussed; some of which appear wholly unknown to the public, while others, although mentioned in the *East India Reports*, now before the House of Commons, are involved in such voluminous obscurity, as to elude the patience of the generality of readers.

It has been shewn, in a preceding Chapter, that, in *April 1765*, Lord Clive, at *Madras*, discovered the very * flourishing condition of the Company's affairs in *Bengal*. By his Lordship's account, in *November 1765*, their revenue, † *exclusive of all expences*, amounted to one million seven hundred thousand pounds sterling *per annum*; and his Lordship, with Mr. Verelst and the rest of the Secret Committee, assured the Directors, in *January 1766*, that ‡ the happy prospect was daily opening to their view, of security and opulence to the Company; while, money flowing into their treasury; contentment expressed by the *country-government*; and peace diffusing its blessings throughout every district of *the Nabob's dominions*, were to them the most pleasing testimonies of the rectitude of the measures they had pursued.

Among the other great benefits derived from their government, they advised the Directors, in *December 1766*, of the great § addi-

* Appendix A. pages 32 to 34, and Reports, vol. III. page 404.

† Appendix A. Num. XI. page 40.

‡ Reports, vol. III. page 515.

§ Verelst's Appendix, page 38.



tion that had already been made to the current specie of the country, by their new-established gold coinage; and Mr. *Verelst*, with the rest of the Committee, were unanimously of opinion with his Lordship, in *January* 1767,* that the * prosperity of the Company's affairs in *Bengal* was fixed upon a solid and permanent basis; that their revenues were increased beyond what they ever before produced, without oppressing the inhabitants; and that their investments might be furnished, expences civil and military paid, and a large quantity of bullion be annually sent to *China*, without importing a single dollar.

After the departure of the noble President, his successor, Mr. *Verelst*, and the Committee, in their † letter to the Directors of the 19th *February* 1767, still dwelt upon the then flourishing condition of the Company's affairs; the state of which, and of the whole country, they said, was such as afforded “the most pleasing assemblage of fortunate circumstances, and of prosperous events, that had occurred at any period.”

But mark, good reader, what different scenes began to appear within the space of only seven months.

In *September* 1767, President *Verelst* and his Committee set forth at large, in their letter to the ‡ Directors, the then untoward symptoms of the decline of the trade, and currency of the provinces; the fatal effects of which they began to experience in the most alarming degree.

The gold-coinage, which, in *December* 1766, was represented to have added so immensely to the current specie of the country, was forced to be suppressed in *July* 1768, being § “one of the principal causes of the bankruptcies among the shroffs and merchants.”

—In *November* 1768, Mr. *Verelst* and the Select Committee further represented to the Court of Directors, that || trade was totally put a stop to, and the settlement in a state of bankruptcy; that the most reputable men in the service could with difficulty procure silver sufficient for the payment of their servants wages; and that they expected shortly to be obliged “to collect the revenues in the commodities produced in the country, without having a prospect of vending them at any rate; as the merchants would be totally deprived of the means to purchase them.”

* Reports, vol. IV. page 153.

† *Verelst's* Appendix, page 47.

‡ Ibid. page 59.

§ Appendix B. Num. XXII. page 296.

|| *Verelst's* Appendix, page 86.



By letter of the 21st *March* 1769, they informed the President and Select Committee at *Fort St. George*, that * *Bengal* was in the most declining condition; that the Company's new-acquired advantages had been placed in the most exaggerated light, and their situation was then so critical and precarious, that they had resolved to curtail the Company's investment: which they afterwards reduced to forty-five lacks of rupees.

On the 5th *April* 1769, Mr. *Verelst* acquainted the Directors, that † though they had then little reason for fears from abroad, yet the internal state of the provinces was a matter of real concern; and unless provided for by speedy and effectual measures, they must “moulder into ruin of themselves, without the intervention of any enemy.”

At a consultation, held the 16th *August* 1769, the Select Committee were also unanimously of opinion, “that the then state of
“ of the revenue, public and private commerce, manufactures and
“ agriculture, was such as gave room for the most serious apprehensions, and that the decline in each of those grand concerns
“ had spread itself so as to produce a most alarming crisis in the
“ Company's affairs.” And in the 39th paragraph of the general letter from *Bengal* of the 25th *September* 1769, the Directors were further informed, that ‡ *such was the stagnation of trade and general decay of credit, that the most opulent amongst the native merchants, or inhabitants of the Presidency, preferred locking their cash up in their chests, to the lending it at interest, even to the most respectable character amongst the Company's servants.*

Such were the blessed effects, in *Bengal*, of the much boasted regulations established for the government of a commercial Empire, by a self-praising Secret Committee, alternately taking upon themselves the business of merchants, soldiers, inquisitors, judges, legislators, and executive magistrates, during the period under contemplation.

Nor were the unremitted endeavours of this Committee less successful in their private traducements of the whole body of the Company's servants, civil and military; for by constantly and secretly accusing them of rapacity, notorious corruption, mean venality, and of every species of vice and immorality, they so far imposed on the Directors, that in the 3d paragraph of their § letter of the

* Reports, vol. IV. page 360.

† *Verelst's* Appendix, page 114.

‡ Reports, vol. IV. page 416.

§ Ibid. page 191.



17th *May* 1766, that Court were weak enough to write to the noble President as follows :

“ We have the strongest sense of the deplorable state to which
 “ our affairs were on the point of being reduced, from the cor-
 “ ruption and rapacity of our servants, and the universal depravity
 “ of manners throughout the settlement ; we agree entirely with
 “ your Lordship, that the train our affairs were then in, would in
 “ a very few months have brought us to a most dangerous situa-
 “ tion * ”

Yet this sudden danger of ruin to *Bengal* was not owing to the servants under Council ; for such had been the rapid and astonishing effects upon the whole community, of the “ *wholesome and season-
 “ able correction*” of those wonderful reformers, that in a letter, dated so early as the 28th of *March* 1768, Mr. *Verelst* assured the Directors, † he had as great an opinion of their then set of servants in general, as of any one body of men ; and the Lord *Clive*, who had first raised the clamour against them, was the first to pronounce their panegyric in the *British* Senate. After laying all their faults upon their banyans in *India*, the noble orator thus proceeds :

‡ “ Hence, Sir, arises the clamour against the *English* gentle-
 “ men in *India*. But look at them in a retired situation, when
 “ returned to *England*, when they are no longer Nabobs and So-
 “ vereigns of the east ;—see if there be any thing tyrannical in
 “ their disposition towards their inferiors ;—see if they are not
 “ good and humane masters ;—Are they not charitable ? Are
 “ they not benevolent ? Are they not generous ? Are they not
 “ hospitable ?—If they are, thus far, not contemptible members
 “ of society, and if in all their dealings between man and man,
 “ their conduct is strictly honourable :—If, in short, there has
 “ not yet been one character found amongst them sufficiently flagi-
 “ tious for MR. FOOTE to exhibit on the theatre in the *Haymarket*,
 “ may we not conclude, that if they have erred, it has been be-
 “ cause they were men, placed in situations subject to little or no
 “ controul.”

It is certain, that between the Nabob in *India*, mounted on his elephant, with his § *Nakeeb*s running before him, and the plain

* See the names of the gentlemen at that time in the direction, Appendix page 123.

† *Verelst's* Appendix, page 107.

‡ Lord *Clive's* speech on the 30th of *March* 1772, page 45.

§ Footmen, who chaunt the praises or heroic deeds of their masters, in *Persian* or *Arabic* verses, when running before them to clear the way.



Englishman in his native country, where an honest possessor will yet venture to dispute the wall with him, if he be insolent, the difference is as great as between a real Nabob and Mr. Foote's representation of one, in the character of Sir Matthew Mite. But it is only the few select men who obtain elephants for their supporters. If the noble Lord, therefore, did not mean to confine his eulogies, in that speech, to those elevated gentlemen, who, after returning to their native country with the fruits of their virtues, had been rewarded with seats in the Senate, from the FREE suffrages of their countrymen, he has made but a just, though inadequate, public atonement for the injuries he had done his fellow-servants, whose prospects in life were blasted by his secret representations against them to their mutual constituents.

Nor less hypocritical and contradictory appear Mr. Verelst's representations concerning the Company's civil and military junior-servants.

From the alleged dissolute state of *Calcutta*, antecedent to Lord Clive's arrival, in one part of his book, he pretends * to shew the necessity which the Select Committee were under, of reclaiming the junior civil-servants from the debauchery in which they were immersed, by dispelling their gaudy dreams of sudden acquired wealth; and also of lessening the incomes of subaltern military officers, for the preservation of order and discipline, and for the prevention of luxury and dissipation: which good and necessary reformations that gentleman represents to have produced such an universal discontent in one order, and mutinous spirit in the other, as threatened destruction to the *English* Empire in *Bengal*.

In another part, Mr. Verelst and the Select Committee describe † the immediate effects of those reformations to have been, in the highest degree, distressful, even to the having endangered the morals of the junior-civil-servants, from the pressing scantiness of their monthly allowances; to the having reduced the subaltern officers so low, that there was scarce a possibility of their subsisting and maintaining the appearance, which they ought, of gentlemen; and to the having rendered the resigning and dismissed officers, the most pitiable objects of compassion and charity.

Yet on the subject of the much-boasted reformations effected by the Committee, in another place, Mr. Verelst is thus pleased to

* Verelst's View, pages 56 to 61.

† Ibid. Appendix, pages 48 and 49.



“ speak for himself and his colleagues in office.— * “ I shall ever
 “ think it an honour to have been a member of the Committee
 “ which first sowed the seeds of œconomy, and which persevered
 “ with such signal success. I shall ever allow the highest praise to
 “ all persons who exerted and distinguished themselves in that
 “ great and laborious work ; and it is with pleasure I here confess
 “ and acknowledge their merits.”

To examine, therefore, the pretensions of these Committees to the merit of œconomy in every department, we will collect together a few facts, from the great numbers that present themselves, and then submit them, in one point of view, to the reader’s judgment.

The first objects which, on this view, offer themselves, are the accounts-current laid before the board at *Calcutta*, by the Presidents Lord *Clive* and Mr. *Verelst*, on their respectively resigning the Company’s government, and by *Richard Smith*, Esq; on his quitting the *Generalship* of their army. These accounts were exhibited in such a mode, that had not Lord *Clive*’s fortune been already made, and his reputation for disinterestedness established, they might have been all taken as proofs of the truth of his Lordship’s own remark, that † *every man who is permitted to make a bill, makes a fortune.*

By Lord *Clive*’s account, dated the 31st *December* 1766, as it stands on the records of the Company, it appears, that the following charges were *necessarily* and *unavoidably* incurred on their account : viz.

1765, May 3d.

For the expences of his Lordship’s voyage from *England*, until his arrival at *Calcutta*, exclusive of 3000 *l.* paid for this purpose by the Directors, Current rupees, 73,489 . 14 . 4

1766, Dec. 31st.

For sundry expences under the head of charges-general, from his Lordship’s arrival in *Calcutta* to this day, 99,629 . 12 . 0

For his Lordship’s table-expences, from ditto to ditto, 97,642 . 1 . 8

* Appendix A. Num. XLIV. page 219.

† Lord *Clive*’s speech, page 53.



| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| For his Lordship's expences in cloaths and linen, from ditto to ditto, | 16,987 . 4 . 7 |
| For wages to secretaries, assistants, and stewards, from ditto to ditto, | 19,722 . 11 . 4 |
| For charges of feeding five elephants, | 941 . 14 . 0 |
| For certain losses on the remittance of his Lordship's jagueer, | 8,375 . 4 . 1 |
| For plate given to the <i>Dutch</i> Governors at the <i>Cape of Good Hope</i> , and at <i>Chinsurah</i> , | 2,177 . 9 . 6 |
| For the fortune with which his Lordship was pleased to reward his faithful servant, <i>Edward Philpot, Esq;</i> | 14,928 . 15 . 8 |

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Current rupees, | <u>333,895 . 7 . 2</u> |
|-----------------|------------------------|

making, at the exchange of two shillings and
three-pence *per* Current rupee, pounds sterling, £ 37,563 . 5 . 2

Ditto for the following articles, exhibited in
his Lordship's further account, laid before the
* House of Commons in *March* 1772, *viz.*

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| For fundry charges of salaries, table-ex- pences, and wearing apparel, | £ 2,795 . 14 . 6 |
| For fundry other expences paid in <i>England</i> , | 1,846 . 5 . 7 |
| For other fortunes given to the following gentlemen, <i>viz.</i> | |

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| To <i>Henry Strachey, Esq;</i> £ 15,942 . 16 . 11 | |
| <i>Edmund Maskelyne, Esq;</i> 13,049 . 19 . 9 | |
| <i>Samuel Ingham, Esq;</i> 9,161 . 19 . 10 | |
| <i>Edward Philpot, Esq;</i> 2,196 . 15 . 1 | |
| <i>Messrs. Wynne, Archdekin,</i> | |
| <i>Coxe, and Ducarell,</i> 3,402 . 0 . 0 | |
| | <u>43,753 . 11 . 7</u> |
| | <u>£ 85,958 . 16 . 10</u> |

The total amount of Lord *Clive's* charges being eighty-five
thousand, nine hundred and fifty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings
and ten-pence; which is said to have exceeded all the moluments

• Lord *Clive's* speech, page 39.



reaped by his Lordship from the salt-trade, commission on the revenues, presents, and perquisites whatever, during his short excursion to *India*, in the sum of 5,816*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.*

By Mr. *Verelst*'s account, which, in humble imitation of his noble predecessor, he has in the same manner recorded on the Company's books, dated the 31st *October* 1769, it appears, his house-expences, servants-wages, &c. from *January* 1767 to *October* 1769, both inclusive, amount to current rupees 424,554, which, at two shillings and three pence *per* current rupee, make, sterling, 47,762*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* This (within rupees 404 . 12 . 5) was just equal to the commission also taken by Mr. *Verelst* from the Company's revenues, exclusive of the other emoluments and presents received by him; which, by his account referred to, are all made to amount to the sum of current rupees 398,062 . 14 . 2.

By Colonel *Smith*'s * account, dated the 9th *November* 1769, it appears he gave away in presents, which he condescended to confer on the Grand Monarch of the *Mogul* Empire, and on other Kings, Princes, Potentates, and † *Grandees* of *Hindustan*, with whom he had had long and intimate connexions, Sunott rupees 124,606 . 0 . 0

And the Colonel's table-expences, from the 1st of *August* 1766, to the 1st of *August* 1769,

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| are set down at | 187,200 . 0 . 0 |
| Sunott rupees | 311,806 . 0 . 0 |
| Exchange at 11 <i>per cent.</i> | 34,298 . 10 . 6 |
| Current rupees | 346,104 . 10 . 6 |
| Making, at 2 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i> <i>per</i> current rupee, sterling, £ | <u>38,936 . 15 . 3</u> |

The next proofs of œconomy we will select from the revenue-department: among which the first are the charges standing on the Company's books under the extraordinary titles, in *Persian*, of ZEAFFUT INGREZ SAHEBAAN and KHELAAT, which may be truly translated, *charges of convivial † entertainments and masquerade-dresses.*

* Reports, vol. IV. page 589.

† Colonel *Smith*'s expression in his letter of the 19th *May* 1769, Appendix, page 196.

‡ Here the reader will naturally reflect upon the condition of the subjugated *Asiatic* provinces under the *Romans*, during the luxurious and degenerated stages of that empire. In *Plutarch's* Life of *Mark Anthony* we read, "that he gave his cook the house of a *Magnetian* citizen, for dressing his supper well." But when he burthened *Asia* with doubling



charges for English gentlemen : and also under the head of *Russum*, or *custom*.

The charges under these disguised titles stand as follow :

April 1766.

ZEAFUT, or the head of entertainments, Sicca
rupees * 45,373 . 2 . 5

April 1767.

KHELAATS, or the head of dresses, for Lord
Clive, Mr. *Sumner*, General *Carnac*, Mr. *Harry Vereist*, Mr. *Francis Sykes*, Mr. *Randolph Marriott*, Mr. *Hugh Watts*, Mr. *Claud Russell*, Mr. *William Aldersey*, Mr. *Thomas Kelsall*, Mr. *Charles Ffloyer*, a gentleman unknown, Mr. *Edmund Maskelyne*, Mr. *Alexander Campbell*, Mr. *Samuel Ingham*, Mr. *Henry Strachey*, and others, † 46,750 . 0 . 0

April 1768.

KHELAATS, For Mr. *Harry Vereist*, Mr. *John Cartier*, Colonel *Richard Smith*, Mr. *Francis Sykes*, Mr. *Richard Becher*, Mr. *James Alexander*, Mr. *Claud Russell*, Mr. *William Aldersey*, Mr. *Charles Ffloyer*, Mr. *Alexander Campbell*, Mr. *Court*, and others, ‡ 79,681 . 4 . 0

Russum, For Mr. *Sykes's* table, 24,000 . 0 . 0
For chairmen and porters, for carrying Mr. *Vereist*, Colonel *Smith*, Mr. *Knott*, and other gentlemen, with their necessaries, backwards and forwards, 35,915 . 0 . 0
.. ————— || 59,916 . 0 . 0

doubling the impost, "*Hylreas*, the agent" (or *Vakeel*), "for those cities, made his remonstrance in very pleasant language, and not ungrateful to *Antkeny*, shewing him, that since he thought fit to double their taxes, he would take some care that they might have their summer and autumn doubled too, that they might be in a condition to satisfy his demands."

* Reports, vol. III. page 451.

† Ibid. vol. IV. page 216.

‡ Ibid. page 220.

|| Records of the Select Committee in the India-house, book Num. 27. page 267.



April 1769.

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------|
| KHELAATS, For Mr. <i>Harry Verelst</i> , Mr. <i>John Cartier</i> , Colonel <i>Richard Smith</i> , Mr. <i>Richard Becher</i> , Mr. <i>Francis Sykes</i> , Mr. <i>James Alexander</i> , Mr. <i>Claud Russell</i> , Mr. <i>Thomas Rumbold</i> , Mr. <i>William Aldersey</i> , Mr. <i>Thomas Kelsall</i> , Mr. <i>Charles Ffloyer</i> , and others, | | | | * 78,535 . 4 . 0 |
| RUSSUM, For Mr. <i>Sykes's</i> table, | | | | 24,000 . 0 . 0 |
| For charges of bearers, or chairmen, to carry fundry <i>English</i> gentlemen backwards and forwards, and for postmen stationed to carry fruits to <i>Calcutta</i> , | | | | 64,472 . 13 . 0 |
| | | | | <hr/> + 88,472 . 13 . 0 |

April 1770.

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| KHELAATS, For Mr. <i>Harry Verelst</i> , Mr. <i>John Cartier</i> , Colonel <i>Richard Smith</i> , Mr. <i>Richard Becher</i> , Mr. <i>James Alexander</i> , Mr. <i>Claud Russell</i> , Mr. <i>Thomas Rumbold</i> , Mr. <i>William Aldersey</i> , Mr. <i>Thomas Kelsall</i> , Mr. <i>Charles Ffloyer</i> , Mr. <i>Robert Maddison</i> , and others, | | | | † 84,657 . 12 . 0 |
| RUSSUM, For Mr. <i>Becher's</i> table, | | | | 24,000 . 0 . 0 |
| For chairmen carrying fundry <i>English</i> gentlemen backwards and forwards, | | | | 28,709 . 15 . 0 |
| | | | | <hr/> 52,709 . 15 . 0 |
| Sicca rupees | | | | 536,095 . 2 . 5 |
| Exchange at 16 <i>per cent.</i> | | | | 85,775 . 3 . 7 |
| Total current rupees | | | | <hr/> 621,870 . 6 . 0 |
| Or at two shillings and three pence | | | | <hr/> <hr/> £ s. 69,543 . 15 . 3 |

* Reports, vol. IV. page 224.

† Ibid. page 233.

‡ Ibid. page 228.

§ Ibid. page 234.



The few articles already before us, exhibited at one view, appear as follow :

| | | | | | |
|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------|---------|
| 1766, Dec. | To amount of <i>the bills made</i> | | | | |
| | | by Lord Clive, | £ | 85,958.. | 16 . 10 |
| 1769, Oct. | To ditto ——— | by Mr. Verelst, | | 47,762 . | 6 . 6 |
| Nov. | To ditto ——— | by General Smith, | | 38,936 . | 15 . 3 |
| 1770, April. | To ditto ——— | by the <i>Durbar</i> Resident and members of the Select Committee, &c. for charges of <i>Asiatic</i> dresses, entertainments, and travelling excursions, for themselves and friends, | | 69,543 . | 15 . 0 |
| | | | £ | 242,201 . | 13 . 7 |

Facility in the operations of arithmetic, and in the auditing of accounts, was not the least of the happy effects of that unanimity at the public boards, which had been so frequently and *deservedly* celebrated by Lord Clive, Mr. Verelst, and the rest of the Select Committee at *Calcutta*. Not only the charges of these extraordinary accounts were passed without the necessary vouchers, but his Lordship and Mr. Verelst were suffered, equally uncontrouled, to fix their own value upon the pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds, which they were pleased to insert in those accounts, as received in presents. As to General Smith's account, it had heretofore been the practice of the Princes of *India* to return to the *English Sirdars* three times the value of what they received in complimentary presents; but from the respective accounts of Governor Verelst and the General it would seem, that their notions of supporting *the Honourable Company's dignity* were diametrically opposite; for while the parsimonious Governor appears to have conferred nothing upon the country-princes, the distinguished General appears to have been above receiving any thing from them on the Company's account.

The reports now before the House of Commons afford many other proofs of the same species of *economy* in the *Bengal* government, after the assumption of the *Dewanee*, from the years 1765 to 1770 inclusive: during which period we have many instances of considerable sums being alienated from the Company's estate, or revenues, and given, without due authority, to the dependants of gentlemen of power or influence. Of this kind appear even many very considerable



ble *jaguers*, granted to a variety of people, from the nominal Nabob's * deputy, *Mohammed Reza Khawen*, down even to General *Smith's* † banyan. Of this sort appears also the pension of eighteen thousand rupees *per annum*, collected in the *Bahar* province, by the single ‡ appointment of Lord *Clive*, for *Abmed Yar Khawen Laitty*; concerning which, when Mr. *Verelst*'s successor and the Select Committee inquired of the Supervisor of that province, on what pretence a *separate collection* was made for that sum, all that Mr. *Alexander* could learn was, that *Laitty* was a man of distinction, whose house and family had been plundered || by the Nabob *Jaffier Aliy Khawen*. And of this kind also appears the remission of duties upon a large quantity of salt, to the amount of 47,769 rupees, *by order of the Nabob*, to *Joyanarain & Ghosaul*, without any reason's being assigned for it.

While measures similar to these were transacted in every part of the provinces UNDER THE COUNTRY-GOVERNMENT, it was not extraordinary that the Court of *East India* Directors should soon experience, that ¶ “the Dewannee-collections scarce answered any other
“ purpose than defraying the civil and military charges of their Presidency
“ of Bengal.” But this sort of business being for a long while kept under the management of the President and members of the Secret Committee, and the Directors being necessarily unacquainted with the disguised or real names and connexions of the persons mentioned in the records which the Committee were pleased to transmit from *India*; of course that Court have been frequently as destitute of materials wherewith to trace a fact, or check deceptions of this sort, as if no accounts had been sent them. For example, when they saw transactions of such a nature upon their books, how could they divine,

* Reports, vol. IV. pages 104, 133, 134, &c. &c.

† Ibid. page 146. Fifty villages, granted in the name of *Roy Kellaram*, called in the upper country *Roy Kkeyallaram*.

‡ Reports, vol. IV. pages 250 and 251.

|| Mr. *Alexander* had been misinformed; for it was *Khedu Yar Khawen Laitty* whom *Meer Jaffier* plundered.

§ Reports, vol. IV. page 211. Instead of 30 rupees *per* hundred maunds of salt, he paid only 9½ *per cent*.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|--------|---------|
| On one article of | : | : | Maunds | 150,000 |
| one ditto | : | : | : | 18,015 |
| one ditto | : | : | : | 65,007 |

Maunds 233,022: Which, at an abate-

ment of 20½ *per cent*. makes rupees 47,769.

¶ Appendix A. page 266.

that



that the before-mentioned *Laitty* was the brother of the late * *Khoda Yar Khewn Laitty*, who was *Meer Jaffier*'s rival candidate for the *Musnud*, upon the expulsion of the Nabob *Serajah al Dowlah*? How could they conjecture, that *Joynarain Ghosaul* was a child, and the son of Mr. *Verelst*'s banyan *Gocul Ghosaul*? Or how could they guess, that *Roy Kellaram* was banyan to General *Smith*?

Correspondent with this unnecessary and unwarranted profusion, while *Bengal* was governed by this pious Committee of Reformers, was the frequency of public visits, embassies, or deputations to and from the Princes and *Ministers* of the country: the most notorious transaction of which kind was the excursion of Mr. *John Cartier*, Colonel *Richard Smith*, and Mr. *Claud Russell*, in November 1768, to the Court of the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*. It was pretended, for the purposes of this EMBASSY, that this Prince was meditating † hostilities against the *English*: and those ‡ “*uncoming rumours*,” which were propagated principally, if not solely, by Colonel *Smith*'s || letters to the Presidency, were at length made the wonderful basis of a new treaty, whereby that Nabob was restricted to a number of forces, which we have the best authority for asserting he had, in fact, never on foot. At a time when the President and Select Committee were constantly complaining to the Directors of the low state of the Company's finances, near four lacks of rupees were dissipated, upon this *deputation*, as presents necessary for supporting *the honour of the Company*; whose dignity was again, on this occasion, so punctiliously considered, that no returns were received, by the Deputies, on the Company's account.

If the proofs already adduced be not deemed sufficient in the opinion of any impartial reader, to set in a true light the real demerits

* This is the man mentioned by Mr. *William Watts* as a considerable person, who had offered himself as Nabob, but who was rejected by Colonel *Clive*, in favour of *Meer Jaffier*, “as his abilities were greater, his reputation better, and his connexions more extensive than those of *Laitty*.” See *Memoirs of the Revolution in Bengal*, Anno 1757, printed for *A. Millar*, 1764, pages 71 and 76.

† Mr. *Verelst* was well convinced of *Sujah al Dowlah*'s peaceable disposition at that time. See Appendix A. Num. XL. page 195.

‡ See the treaty, with the Committee's exalted account of this deputation, Reports, vol. IV. page 87.

|| See a letter from the Select Committee to Colonel *Richard Smith*, Commander in Chief under the Presidency. Dated the 23d February 1768. Appendix A. Num. XVIII. page 363.

§ The Court of Directors appear to have seen through this farce. Vide the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th paragraphs of their letter of the 23d March 1770. Appendix A. Num. XLV. pages 225 and 226.



of those self-applauding Committees, on the points of abuse of authority in their public stations, iniquitous deceptions and concealments, and profusion of the public money; let him peruse the 4th * report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, on the subject of the celebrated MATOOT. He will there see a tax established that was unlimited in its extent, because the consciences of the collectors were the only measures of its necessity; and inscrutable in its operations, because their own accounts were the only checks upon the collections. He will there see large sums acknowledged to have been collected by a mode destructive of the manufactories and agriculture of the country, and productive of such scenes of iniquity, oppression, and peculation, as are beyond description; while the harmless subjected inhabitants, deprived of the protection of their native Princes, have had no other recourse left them, but to heaven, for justice: and he will likewise there discover, that this wicked mode of collection was originally † established by Lord *Clive* and the Select Committee.

But the *Matoot-collection* was continued and increased to an amazing extent after his Lordship's departure; and from the sums thereby levied upon the poor natives, were discharged the debts which had been contracted at the *Durbar*, for the charges of the dresses and entertainments of *English* gentlemen, under the heads already noticed of *Zcaffūt*, *Khelaat*, and *Russūm*; while the accounts of those extraordinary charges were industriously concealed from the knowledge of the Company; arising, as the Resident at the *Durbar* apprehended, ‡ “from the fear the gentlemen of the Select Committee had, that the Company would not permit such an expence to be kept up at the *Poonēa*; notwithstanding it was deemed so necessary in the eyes of the country-people, and always held in the utmost veneration.”

It would be an endless task to follow the late Presidents and Select Committees of *Calcutta* through the labyrinths of contradiction, inconsistency, and wilful deception which they practised to obtain unmerited honours and emolument to themselves, while they imposed upon fluctuating and ignorant Courts of Directors, to the injury of the *East India* Proprietors and the Public, and to the dishonour and prejudice of their fellow-servants. The reader hath seen, in this chapter, some of the many *righteous* means by which *Bengal* was governed under their administration; and the operative effects

* Reports, vol. IV. pages 110, &c.

† Ibid. page 214.

‡ Ibid.



of that government have been shewn, by the testimony, on record, of those most concerned in it, to have been no other than the sudden reduction of a whole nation from a high pitch of affluence and prosperity, to the lowest degree of misery.

What then will be the sensations of his benevolent mind, when, upon the same records, he sees those effects described to have been produced by counsels and regulations founded on the most consummate wisdom and justice?—Yet such were the representations which, in the midst of the distresses of their ruined country, the poor tools of Nabobs were forced to give, while * “ *the mouths of every body* “ *were full of the praises of the Governor and Gentlemen of the Council,* “ *for their judicious and upright management of the affairs of the Em-* “ *pire, and their regard for the welfare of it's inhabitants!*”

* See two letters from *Seyf al Dowlah* and *Mahommed Reza Khawn*, as recorded by Mr. *Verelst* on Consultation the 27th *December* 1768. Appendix B. Num. XXIX. and Num. XXX. pages 298 and 299.



C H A P. XI.

ON the POLITICAL SYSTEM of the COMPANY, and their late GOVERNING SERVANTS ; with a VINDICATION of what hath been PUBLISHED by the AUTHOR, on that SUBJECT.

IN considering the nature of the Company's political system in *Bengal*, it will be very material to advert to the mode in which their Governors have managed what they call the *Persian* or country-correspondence.

In the direction of all matters concerning the political interests of the Company, the correspondence, of late years, with the Princes of *India*, has been confined solely to the Presidents or Select Committees, to whom the Courts of Directors have, at different times, thought proper to entrust the conducting of their system. On this principle, by a fixed regulation for practice, called a standing-order, in the Company's service, such correspondence has been usually carried on through the channel of the Governor only, with directions for him to lay the copies thereof before the board ; and this he hath generally performed in such manner, and at such times, as he deemed necessary and convenient.

Upon this system, it is plain, that the *Asiatic* Princes must naturally look up to the Governor, as the sole administrator of all justice, protection, and power under the Company ; contrary to every principle of a *British* government. And the Governor being under little or no controul, in this business, the board at *Calcutta*, or the Directors in *England*, have never had any stronger check than his integrity for their security in obtaining any knowledge of the state of the negotiations with the country-powers, on which their all depended.

This sort of exclusive communication was ever found by the Company's Governors in *India*, to be the grand source of their private emoluments ; and however necessary or expedient the Company's standing-order, on this point, might at first appear, yet there were never sufficient checks established in a business of such moment to their own prosperity, and to the welfare of the natives of *India*.



The transactions of the Company's ruling servants, from the first period of their interfering with the politics of *India*, have at all times afforded sufficient experience of the necessity of such checks. But to furnish the candid reader, from the transactions of more modern times, with materials to assist his judgment on this subject, we beg leave to direct his eye to the Reports of the House of Commons. He will therein perceive, that the abuse of this exclusive privilege of communication with the Nabob and his officers was what principally provoked the resentment of * *Serajah al Dowlah*, which, in *June* 1756, brought on the loss of *Calcutta*. At this period, Mr. *William Watts*, the Company's chief at *Cossimbazar*, was their political negociator at the *Durbar* at *Murshedabad*, where, under the auspices of the noble Lord *Clive*, he conducted that conspiracy which, in 1757, terminated in the expulsion of the Nabob, and the acquisition of the noble Lord's jagueer. His Lordship hath informed the House of Commons, that Mr. *Watts* † employed two or three months in the negociation of that revolution, and that the correspondence was carried on entirely between himself and Mr. *Watts*. And although there never was a crisis in which it was so requisite for the Company to be acquainted with the proceedings of their ruling servants, it appears, by the same evidence, that the intercourse which had been so carried on in cypher, between the President and the Resident at the *Durbar*, “ was not entered in the “ *country-correspondence*, or any where else.”

By this suppression, ‡ “ the Company were left entirely in the “ dark with respect to more than a whole year's transactions” of the greatest moment. But, what is more extraordinary, such papers as Lord *Clive* did possess, he did not think himself under an obligation to produce, as § not relating to the commercial affairs of his constituents, whose dependance, according to his Lordship's ideas, at the time which those papers related to, was transferred from the *Indian* government, to a dependance upon || himself.

* Journals of the House of Commons, vol. XXXIII. pages 794, 868, &c.

† Ibid. page 804.

‡ See Mr. Secretary *James*'s letter to Lord *Clive*, of the 12th *August* 1763. Ibid. page 877.

§ Ibid.

|| When the patent of the jagueer was put into Lord *Clive*'s hands by *Juggut Saut*, in the presence of Mr. *Francis Sykes*, Mr. *Luke Sraffen*, and Major *Garnac*, his Lordship says——“ I confess it gave me the greater pleasure to find it to be the Lordship “ of the Company's lands, because the Company was thereby freed from all dependance “ on the government.” See Lord *Clive*'s letter to the Proprietors, printed for *J. Young*, 1764; reprinted by *H. Evans*, pages 34 and 36.



After the revolution of the year 1760, in favour of *Meer Cossim*, and during the negociations which led to the restoration of *Meer Jaffer*, the gentlemen of the Council, guided by the experience of what had passed, would not implicitly trust to this exclusive correspondence of the President; and, therefore, at a * consultation held the 7th *March* 1763, the letters to *Meer Cossim* were drawn up from the resolutions of the Council, and approved by the board, before the President was permitted to transmit them, under his seal, to that Nabob. But, notwithstanding all this precaution, the Court of Directors, in their letter of the 24th *December* 1765, complained to their President and Council, of gross suppressions in the country-correspondence, and that the copies thereof, which were sent home, were evidently + unfaithful registers.

The intelligent reader will, therefore, readily conceive, the real cause of that jealousy which the Company's Governors have ever shewn at any person's corresponding with the officers of the country-government except through themselves, although the objections ostensibly urged against such correspondence have been, that it was contrary to the *standing-order* of the Company, a degradation of the President's dignity, or an interference with his official department.

The noble Lord *Clive*, who, in the transactions of his own and other preceding governments in *Bengal*, had seen and experienced the good effects of this exclusive communication, was *blessed* with a Committee who were the first to give examples, to their fellow-servants, of that unanimity, self-denial, humility, and disinterestedness, which his Lordship deemed essential to the *welfare of the service*. They well knew that the best security of virtue is to avoid temptation, and, therefore, within less than a month after their arrival at *Calcutta*, taking into consideration the many attempts which had been made to destroy the unanimity, and *corrupt the integrity* of the members of the Committee, through the influence of ill-disposed persons, they resolved, † “ that all intercourse with the “ Nabob, his ministers, and the country-powers, should be conducted *by the Right Honourable President*, as the most effectual “ method to convince those ill-disposed persons, that no motives of

* Reports, vol. III. page 493.

† Ibid. vol. IV. page 126.

‡ See the Select Committee proceedings of the 5th *June* 1765; at which were present, Lord *Clive*, Mr. *Sumner*, Mr. *Verelst*, and Mr. *Sykes*. Reports, vol. III. page 410.



“ private advantage, nor desire of increasing their fortunes, could
 “ ever seduce the members of that board from the duty they owed
 “ to themselves, *the confidence they reposed in each other*, or the steady
 “ resolution they had formed to pursue every method that tended to
 “ promote the Company’s interest, or the peace, prosperity, and
 “ happiness of the country.”

When all communication was thus concentrated in the Governors and Commanders in Chief of the Company’s armies, they thereby possessed a wonderful facility in turning all transactions with the *country-powers* to the advantage of the Company, and the happiness of the community; and in such situations they have at all times found it as easy to negotiate a revolution, *to secure the commercial interests of the Company*, as a jaguer to free them from dependance on the *country-government*; while, by a turn of the pen, of equal facility in *Persian* stenography, a loan could be changed into a donation, or a donation into a legacy, which, when other transmutations became inexpedient, might be converted into a fund for the maintenance of invalid or superannuated officers and their widows!

But if Mr. *Verelst* had not so violently attacked the veracity of the author of *Considerations*, &c. and, in support of the merits of the late Presidents and Select Committees of *Bengal*, expressly undertaken to * “ demolish his representation of political transactions, by
 “ proving those acts of the Select Committee to have flowed from
 “ a sense of duty and knowledge of the public interest, which that
 “ gentleman has attributed to malignant passions, or to yet meaner
 “ motives,” many of those transactions might have passed unnoticed, which have now been necessarily dragged forth to public view.

The grand source of the military operations, and, eventually, of the ambition of *Europeans*, of late years, in *India*, was the dissolution, in effect, of the Mogul Empire by the invasion of *Nader Shah*; who so weakened and impoverished the government at *Dehly*, as to furnish to its provincial substitutes, easy opportunities for assuming independency. This had become the case in *Bengal*; and it hath been clearly shewn, to have been the same in the other provinces, by many other writers, as well as the author of *Considerations on India Affairs*, whom Mr. *Verelst* affects particularly to answer.

After the *Portuguese*, the *French* first entertained ideas of making territorial acquisitions on the continent of *India*; and Mr. *Verelst*



himself acknowledges, that “the * ambition of the *French* first “drew the *English* into the field.”——Such a project having been framed by the rival of *Great Britain* in *Asia*, and her natural enemy in *Europe*, a war breaking out between the two kingdoms must have immediately directed the attention of the *French* towards the ruining of the *British* influence and power in *India*; and to the destruction of the *English East India Company*, on any favourable occasion, as their most powerful *European* rival on that continent. The war, therefore, begun in *Europe* was not so much the cause of, as the occasion furnished for, their making attacks on the *English Company's* settlements, in pursuit of their premeditated plan of power to be established in *Asia*.

The imbecility of the revolted provinces offered so strong a temptation to attempt the accomplishment of such a scheme, that even before any advices were received of the successes of the *French* on the coast of *Coromandel*, under Monsieur *Dupleix*, two *British* subjects, *James Mill* and *John Acton*, in the service of the late Emperor of *Germany*, had formed the plan of landing in *Bengal*, and afterwards of marching to *Murshedabad*, dethroning the reigning Nabob, possessing themselves of his treasure which they then estimated at an incredible sum, and of placing another Nabob on the *Musnud*. *Mill* and *Acton* obtained a commission under the great seal of the Empire, empowering them to fit out a sufficient number of ships in a warlike manner, to proceed to *Bengal* and there take possession of the settlement that had been before obtained for the *Ostend Company*, at *Bankibazar*; under sanction of which enterprise, they proposed to carry their further plan into execution.

In consequence of his Imperial Majesty's commission, in the year 1746, three ships were actually fitted out in the *Thames*, viz. the *Cumberland* and *Kingston* of 36 guns each, and the *Hardwick* of 40, under the command of *Acton*; and a corps of 550 men, selected from the Imperial army, with a train of artillery, were ready to embark at *Leghorn*, in ships prepared to carry them to the island of *Madeira*, where stores were sent for them from *England*. The scheme, however, being defeated, in the moment as it were for execution, by government's interfering in a manner that had like to have been productive of a war, Colonel *Mill* afterwards proposed that *England* should join with the Emperor in the expedition; and with fifteen hundred, or two thousand troops, he undertook to



answer for its success, at the risk of his head; as appears by his two memoirs, copies of which, from an original manuscript, are given in the * Appendix.

Although this proposal was not then accepted, either by the *East India* Company or government, yet the revolution which took place in *Bengal*, ten years afterwards, was effected on a plan precisely similar to that which had been the fruitless object of Colonel *Mill's* ambition.

With respect to the pretences which were then urged, by the servants of the Company, to justify their so changing the Company's commercial for a military system, in *Bengal*; it is beyond a doubt, that the abuses and intrigues of *Europeans* in general, and of the *English* Company's servants in particular, instigated the Nabob, *Serajah al Dowlah*, to attempt the capture of *Calcutta*, in 1756, wherein he so well succeeded: for long before that period, or the protection given to † *Rajahbullub's* family, the Company's records had abounded with instances of such practices as could not be reasonably expected to be tolerated in a dependent and protected set of men under any government whatever. So early as *March* 1757, as hath been shewn in another place, we see the Court of Directors were themselves inclined to set the Prince of the country at defiance, by encouraging their President and Council at *Bengal*, upon their own representations, to shelter the effects and persons of the ‡ natives with steadiness and resolution, in order not to render *their* protection ineffectual, and thereby subject *the English flag* to contempt. And even Mr. *Verelst* after mentioning the re-taking of *Calcutta*, by Admiral *Watson* and Colonel *Clive*, and the re-establishment of peace between the Nabob and the Company, proceeds as follows:

§ “ Certain intelligence was afterwards received of *Serajah al Dowlah's* design to extirpate the *English*, whenever *our forces* should return to the coast. Hostilities, therefore, again commenced. The nature of the government, the character of the Prince, and the universal distrust which from these causes prevailed, afforded abundant occasions of intrigue; and enabled Mr. *Watts* and Colonel *Clive*, to whom the whole conduct of this business was committed, to cherish a disaffection, which pre-

* Vide Appendix A. Numbers IV. and V. pages 15 and 16.

† See a letter from *Richard Becker*, *Lake Serpent*, and others, dated at *Dacca* the 28th July 1756. Journals, vol. XXXIII. page 306.

‡ Reports, vol. III. page 479.

§ *Verelst's* View, page 42.



“ vented any effectual measures for defence, on the part of the
 “ Nabob. Our army advanced within thirty miles of the capital
 “ unassured of assistance; but a want of confidence in the enemy’s
 “ camp, with the advantageous situation of the *English*, afforded an
 “ easy victory to a handful of troops; and *Meer Jaffier*, in pur-
 “ suance of a previous treaty, was immediately proclaimed Subah-
 “ dar of *Bengal*.” And in another place——* “ The malice of
 “ Mr. *Bolts* does not rest here. He represents this revolution as
 “ an enterprize of no difficulty. Speaking of the battle of *Plassey*,
 “ he says, “ Happy it was for the Company, that this numerous
 “ army” (of 20,000 horse, 50,000 foot, and 50 pieces of heavy
 cannon) “ made so little resistance, that according to Mr. *Scrafton*,
 “ there were only seventy men killed and wounded.”

Had not *the whole conduct of this business* been industriously com-
 mitted to so few hands; had not Mr. *William Watts* himself been
 the principal † historiographer of this celebrated revolution; had
 not the Company’s *Persian* and country-correspondence relative
 thereto been lost, or suppressed; had not the evidence before the
 public been of parties, sharers in the plunder, and deeply interested
 in obliterating facts; or had we the testimony of *Serajab al Dow-
 lab*, *Omichund*, and other natives to oppose to such evidence, the
 truth might have been discovered with less difficulty. Here, we
 have Mr. *Vereist*’s word for the certainty of the Nabob’s design to
 extirpate the *English*, when occasion should offer; but at the same
 time we have the more certain information, that the servants of a
 trading community, living under the protection of an *Indian* go-
 vernment, uninstructed by their employers, and when defensive
 operations would have been most equitable; did violate the peace
 stipulated with that government; did enter into intrigues to pro-
 mote treachery and disaffection among its chief officers; did march
 an army to overturn it, which was by treachery effected; did seat
 on the *Musnud* the very officer who had been seduced to betray and
 ruin his Prince, and did then, *honourably*, divide the plunder with
 that traitor.

So far was the scheme, similar to Colonel *Mill*’s, pursued to
 completion; and such, fairly sifted from the dust of disguise, is Mr.
Vereist’s and every other account of the first rise of the present go-
 vernment in *Bengal*; the progress of which, over all *India*, to this

* *Vereist’s View*, &c. page 17.

† *Memoirs of the revolution in Bengal* 1757. London, printed for A. Miller, 1764.
 day,



day, has been the setting up or pulling down of Nabobs, for the convenience of the Company or their servants: the last unfledged youth of the family in *Bengal* being now in possession of a ruling title without power, and with little income, for the sole purpose of giving pretences to a trading community, under colour of his mock authority, to practise such acts of tyranny, oppression, or rapine, as may be found safe, or expedient, under the convenient system of the present DOUBLE GOVERNMENT.

With respect to the writer's account of the battle of *Plassey*, what he said thereon is strictly supported, not only by the authority of Mr. *Scrafton*, whom he quoted, but by the evidence that was given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, in *May* 1772; and particularly by the description of the battle that was there read by Sir *Eyre Coote*.—It was not the writer's intention to examine into the merits of that battle; but since he is so publicly called upon, he must as openly assert the truth, grounded on the well known facts attending it;—that the plains of *Plassey*, on the 23d of *June* 1757, exhibited a scene of treachery and rebellious rout; and not of a contested and glorious victory, that could of itself be justly made the illustrious foundation of an *English* barony, in whatever light it may have been represented to impose on the Sovereign and the people of this nation. At the same time it may be allowed, that the very marching with a handful of men, to meet so numerous an army, as acknowledged by the author of * *Considerations*, while there was a possibility of the rebels returning to their duty, was certainly a hazardous enterprize; and had the battle been won while the Right Honourable Baron had been asleep, the writer would have been as ready as any other man to do justice to the merits of a heaven-born general; since none but the enemies of the human species can be offended at a battle's being gained with little trouble, resistance, or bloodshed.

We will now employ a few considerations on the late situation and dignified character of SHAH ALIUM, the MOGUL EMPEROR, who, we are sorry to say, has not been treated with greater faith, or used for purposes less unworthy, than the late Nabobs of *Bengal*. Yet had not † Mr. *Verelst* and Colonel ‡ *Richard Smith* also particularly called the writer forth on this subject, he would will-

* *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 40.

† *Verelst's View*, page 19. &c.

‡ See Appendix F. Num. XL. page 530.



ingly have refrained from further exposing the misfortunes of that poor, impoverished, abused, and deluded Prince.

In his * memorial to the Directors, of the 5th *September* 1768, the writer had spoken of this Emperor's being, "*as it were, a prisoner in the camp,*" when Colonel *Smith*, at the head of the Company's army, had received a *teep* from him for two hundred thousand rupees, and could not persuade his Majesty to take it back, on the Governor and Council's refusing their concurrence for his receiving the money. The Colonel's indignation being roused on this occasion, on the 19th *September* 1768, he entered a minute on the consultations, in terms highly characteristic of the man, wherein, interpreting the above expression to mean a charge, that he had actually imprisoned the person of the EMPEROR, SHAH ALLUM, he declared the assertion to be *an infamous falsehood; and that he was only surprised the writer had + invented nothing worse against him.*

The Select Committee, in *June* 1765, had declared, in express terms, that this Prince was † "dependent on their bounty; and "that his whole hopes, not only of protection, but *even of subsistence,* "rested upon them."—And Colonel *Alexander Dow*, who, from a personal attachment, speaks as partially of him as any man can do, thus describes his situation to have been at that period.—

§ "He keeps the poor resemblance of a court at *Illahabad*, where "a few Omrahs, in hopes of better days to their Prince, having "expended their fortunes in his service, still exist the ragged pensioners of his poverty, and burden his gratitude with their presence."—The Court of Directors also, in expressing their disapprobation of this transaction of the *teep*, frankly acknowledge the poverty of SHAH ALLUM, and that, of all the Princes of the East, he was the || least capable of affording to make presents.—But to shew what degree of liberty SHAH ALLUM was deemed to possess, the reader must be informed, that in *April* 1768, when his Imperial Majesty entertained thoughts of proceeding up the country, the gentleman who, in Colonel *Smith's* absence, commanded the brigade stationed *for this King's protection*, actually demanded instructions from the Secret Committee at *Calcutta*, ¶ "*how far he was*

* Appendix F. Num. XXXII. page 507.

† Ibid. page 530.

‡ Select Committee, 21st *June* 1765. Reports, vol. III. page 423.

§ *Dow's Hindustan*, vol. II. page 392.

¶ Appendix A. page 192.

* Letter from Sir Robert Barker to the Select Committee of the 3d *April* 1765.



“ *to be answerable for his Majesty’s person, and how he was to act,*
 “ *should his Majesty take any* INDISCREET STEP, AND TALK OF
 “ LEAVING ILLAHABAD ?”

We will admit, that this Prince was seated with much pomp on a *Musnud*, approached bare-foot, and addressed with great veneration. So we read, the *Israelites*, of old, adored a golden calf, which they themselves had exalted. But it is submitted to the judgment of the unprejudiced reader, from the facts now before him, whether there was any impropriety in the writer’s expression, that *Shah Allum*, at the time mentioned, “ was, as it were, a prisoner in the” *English Company’s* “ camp ?”

It was this Prince on whom the provinces of *Korah* and *Illahabad* were conferred, * “ *his possessions being guarantied by the English,*
 “ to which was likewise added an annual payment of twenty-six
 “ lacks from *Bengal* ;” and who was thereby placed in a situation to confirm Lord *Clive’s* jagueer, as related by the author of † *Considerations*, &c. and to shew such deserved marks of gratitude and generosity to the Generals *Carnac* and *Smith*, as are mentioned by ‡ Mr. *Verelst* ; who, with the Council, in July 1767, informed his Imperial Majesty, § “ *that they earnestly wished their attachment*
 “ *might appear to the world more connected by honour than by any in-*
 “ *terested tie ; as it was most glorious for him, and most reputable*
 “ to themselves, to have a friendship founded on such a basis.”

But it was this Prince who had also been described, on the records of the same Select Committee, in July 1766, in the following, among other words : || “ Surrounded by the meanest of
 “ knaves and sycophants, he is ever ready to follow their advice,
 “ even though it be to the detriment of his *late benefactors*.——
 “ Every day’s experience convinces us, that it is not the Company’s
 “ interest to maintain any connexion with a man so weak in un-
 “ derstanding, and so very deficient in the principles of honour and
 “ gratitude.—Provided he withdrew himself from *our protection*, it
 “ is no great matter *what refuge he seeks*.”

* *Verelst’s View*, &c. page 18.

† *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 50.

‡ *Verelst’s View*, page 19. Also Appendix B. Num. II. page 287.

§ Ibid. note page 20.

|| Letter from Lord *Clive* and General *Carnac* to Mr. *Verelst* and the Select Committee at *Calcutta*, dated the 14th July 1766.



It was likewise this Prince who was to be deprived of the annual stipend of twenty-six lacks, which had, in fact, been conferred on him for the temporary uses of his name, as soon as a fair opportunity could be found, by the express * instructions, in *November* 1768, of the Court of Directors; who, in *April* 1771, further † recommended to their President and Council, to fix his IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S residence within their own provinces.——It was, lastly, this MOGUL EMPEROR who, by proceeding to the ancient capital, *Dehly*, avoided the royal apartments that would otherwise have been prepared for him, agreeably to the *recommendations* of the Directors, at *Ragemahl*, or *Mongbeer*; and who, for *taking the indiscreet step of leaving* Illahabad, has been finally chastised by the Company and their servants, first, in their with-holding his said annual stipend, and, afterwards, by depriving him of the provinces of *Korah* and *Illahabad*, and giving them, for a pecuniary gratification, to *his Vizier*, the Nabob *Sujah al Dowlah*.

The reader, therefore, who impartially considers the facts herein related and proved, can no longer doubt what the author of *Considerations* hath asserted; ‡ “that his IMPERIAL MAJESTY was dependent for his subsistence upon the servants of an incorporated society of *English* merchants, who had raised him to that exalted title for the serving of their own temporary purposes; that he was no other than their tool; and would necessarily remain such, so long as he continued among them; and that the § pretence of governing *Bengal* by a NABOB, under such a GREAT MOGUL, was a most scandalous imposition; those puppets of sovereignty, being no other than pensioned instruments of imposture and tyranny; while the annual charges incurred under their clokes have been made, in no inconsiderable degree, a fund in reversion, for the private purses of the governing *Europeans* in those countries.”

So long as it served their purposes, it was not wonderful that the Company, or such of their servants as have had this Prince, in the character of Mogul Emperor, under their management, should hold him out as a potent and independent Sovereign; for, otherwise, what would become of his dewannee-funnuds, grants of

* See the 33d paragraph of their letter of the 11th *November* 1768. Appendix A. page 191.

† See the 44th, 45th, and 46th paragraphs of their letter of the 10th *April* 1771. Ibid. page 256.

‡ *Considerations*, vol. I pages 33, 50, &c.

§ Ibid. page 217.



jagueers, *teeps*, free-gifts, or the honorary titles which have for some time past dazzled and imposed on the western world? The dignified disguise of such an elevated authority might serve to furnish the Company's ruling-servants with convenient pretences for planning the seizure of a Prince's * dominions, or an expedition to † *Dehly*; but the imposture was carried too far, when, under the veil of their *country*, or *Persian correspondence*, they made use of this poor, helpless, and deluded Prince, as a channel of familiar communication with the ‡ Sovereign of *Great Britain*.

Mr. *Verelst* says, § “ should any private man, taking advantage
“ of an unsettled government, oppress and harass the harmless
“ natives of *Bengal*, and endeavour to shelter himself under the let-
“ ter of laws calculated for a very different state of society; let
“ the *miscreant* be punished as his crimes deserve, by a removal
“ from the scene of his ravages, by the contempt and detestation of every
“ honest mind.” And again, || “ Mr. *Bolts* does not chuse to in-
“ vestigate, in this place, all the private reasons which occasioned
“ the dewannee being assumed by Lord *Clive* and his Select Com-
“ mittee.—Why not? If Mr. *Bolts* knows any private reasons,

* See, in Reports of the House of Commons, vol. IV. page 88, his Imperial Majesty's most gracious answer to the petition of “ *his loyal servants the English Sirdars*,” or Deputies, in December 1768, proposing the recovery of the *dismembered usurpations* of the Rajah *Hindospur*, to be appropriated to the payment of the *English* Company's army. In this Prince's dominions, to the south-westward of *Illahabad*, are the mines of *Chudderpoor* and *Panna*, from whence great quantities of diamonds are extracted. Had the plan been carried into execution, this precious commodity might have been found a convenient and *honourable succedaneum*, by the gentlemen of the Select Committee; for, the covenants which restricted the receipt of presents could, in no wise, have been construed to restrain them from digging diamonds out of a mine. By the Select Committee's letter to the Directors, of the 6th January 1769 (See *Verelst's* Appendix, page 89.) it appears, that these territories of the Rajah *Hindospur*, if taken, would have been also considered as a convenient fund, that would have enabled *Shah Allum* “ to bestow re-
“ wards on those whom he might chuse to honour with a provision;” which was certainly the primary object of the Committee's consideration, in giving their “ *hints to the Depu-
“ ties*” on that business, in consequence of a formal resolution that had been taken at a meeting of the 31st August 1768. See also Appendix A. Num. XXXVII. page 183.

† See General *Smith's* letter to the Select Committee of the 1st May 1769, expressing his Mogul Majesty's solicitude for a *body-guard*, to conduct him to *Dehly*; which the General would have sent under the command of the same gentleman whom he acknowledged, before the House of Commons, to have been his partner in trade. Appendix A. Num. XLI. page 195.

‡ Ibid. page 196.

§ *Verelst's* View, &c. page 14.

|| Ibid. page 20.

“ should



“ should this *virtuous zealot* suppress them? If he knows none,
 “ how base the imputation!”

After duly considering the facility with which such scenes were perpetrated, as have been described, and the facts which have been proved, in this and the preceding chapters, the candid reader will be able to distinguish the men who have deserved the judgment denounced by Mr. *Verelst*, for taking advantage of an unsettled government.—If to all those circumstances, he adds the consideration of the *political* manœuvres of the Company’s ruling servants with the GREAT MOGUL *Shah Allum*, and the Nabobs of *Bengal*; their confirmations of Lord *Clive*’s jagueer; the progress of *East India* stock from the year 1765 to 1769, in consequence of the very exaggerated and imposing accounts transmitted * from *India*; the purchases of that stock made by † Lord *Clive*; the conduct of the deluded Proprietors in voting an additional ten years grant of the ‡ jagueer to that noble Lord; the operation of the salt monopoly; the sudden fortunes obtained by the Select Committee-gentlemen, and the acquisitions made by all his Lordship’s other friends, dependants and creatures, under the *potent* PRINCES of *Bengal*, together with the powerful effects and secret advantages attainable by wealth, from seats or suffrages in public assemblies; he will easily perceive how far the sources of emoluments, or pecuniary gratifications, were § “ *removed by the GRANT of the revenue to the* “ *English East India Company,*” and he will be at no loss to discover the *private* advantages of the dewannee system, || “ *called, in* “ *derision, the DOUBLE-GOVERNMENT.*”

* Appendix A. Num. XI. page 40. See also the 13th parag. of Lord *Clive*’s letter to the Directors of the 30th *September* 1765. Reports, vol. III. page 394.

† Appendix A. Num. X. pages 28 to 39.

‡ Ibid. Num. XXX. page 164.

§ *Verelst*’s View, &c. page 11.

|| Ibid. page 20.



C. H A P. XII.

ON the EXCLUSIVE TRADE TO AND FROM INDIA; the REGULATIONS of the EAST INDIA COMPANY, and their late SERVANTS, for CONDUCTING the INTERIOR COMMERCE of BEN-GAL, and their *Practice* of SEIZING their FELLOW SUBJECTS by MILITARY GUARDS in INDIA, and TRANSPORTING them to ENGLAND: with Remarks on the late ACT of PARLIAMENT for the better MANAGEMENT of the COMPANY'S Affairs.

THE advantages of freedom in commerce, and the consequent destructive tendency of monopolies in general, are universally allowed by all men of knowledge; and no plea, but of a necessity, founded in the ancient state of the *East Indies* and of *Europe*, was ever urged, by the ablest writers, in support of exclusive Companies among the *Europeans* who tradèd to and from those countries. Where such necessity therefore does not exist, the general interest will be always best promoted by free traffic.

But it is easily demonstrable, that there can be no necessity for continuing any such exclusive trade, in the present altered state of the *English East India* concerns, when this kingdom possesses important territories in *India*, and hath the power of enacting laws on either side of the ocean, for turning into the scale of this country all the advantages of an open regulated commerce, as much as the nature of such trade will admit.

It may, however, be thought an unpopular attempt to attack prejudices established by time and habit, and strengthened by a variety of combined interests, which only time, with much experience, can weaken, or remove. Mr. *Verelst*, therefore, takes the present popular side of this question, and draws conclusions, which, he says, are evident, of “the * *necessity* of an exclusive Company; “the expediency of uniting the commerce, the political power, “and the revenues in the same hands,” from the practice of other

* *Verelst's View*, page 43.



European nations ; although none of them, in fact, are in the same favourable predicament in which *Great Britain* stands at present on the Continent of *India*.

Yet, without the advantages, in that respect, which this nation now possesses, *France* and *Portugal* are already recovered from this error, by encouraging an open trade to *India*, in such manner, that it must be owing to the future deviations of their respective governments from the first principles of commercial legislation, if, uninterrupted by war, their practice do not, in a very few years, evince the propriety of *Great Britain's* either following their examples, or of confining her importations from *Asia* to the consumption of her own dominions. If we may be allowed to judge, from present experience, what is most likely to obviate such events, it is the impolitic measures which the Company pursue in order to prevent all other nations from obtaining goods in the provinces under their influence ; which, should no worse consequences ensue, if continued, must finally terminate in the so total debasement and dearth of the *Indian* manufactures, as must render their importation neither profitable to themselves or to any other nation.

The necessity of creating exclusive Companies, after the discovery of the trade round the *Cape of Good Hope*, arose principally, if not wholly, from the acts of piracy and murder committed in *India* by one set of *Europeans* upon the other ; and from their instigating and entering into alliances with the *Indian* Princes for the same purposes. In the immutable nature of things, arms, revenues, and commerce, are as heterogeneous as fire, earth, and water.—When blended, they are destructive of each other ; but while they act separately, they are of mutual support.—But to such men as reason on political and commercial principles and practice, Mr. *Verelst* does well to say, his * “ *work cannot be addressed.*” The distressed natives of *Bengal*, and the suffering Proprietors of *India* Stock in *England*, have alike woefully experienced the fatal effects of a junction of such powers.

As well grounded is Mr. *Verelst's* sagacious information, † “ that “ the Exchequer receives annually four fifths of the profits gained “ by the Company :” for if, as we must suppose, he means in customs and excise taxes, the same kind of merit may be claimed with equal justice, by brewers, distillers, and all other traders pro-

* *Verelst's View*, page 44.

† *Ibid.*

portionally,



portionally, with regard to their respective businesses. Can any considerate man suppose, that government would suffer beers, brandies, teas, or any other exciseable commodities, so to burden the labour and trade of this kingdom, as at present, for the mere benefit of dealers? Or that it would be at such an annual expence for preventing the smuggling in of those articles, but for the duties and excises thereon, which are necessary for supplying its own demands on the subject? The allegations, therefore, of public advantages so derived from the Company, are no other than the effects of gross ignorance, or great dissingenuity; for such taxes are not paid to government by them, but by the consumers of their commodities.

But if, in his estimation of deductions made by government from the profits of the *East India* Company, Mr. *Verelst* includes the four hundred thousand pounds which, for three years, were paid by them, as a kind of quit-rent for nearly four millions, which they have collected of annual-revenue for many years past, it is still a more ridiculous assertion, because the whole was indisputably the property of the state.

So likewise, when Mr. *Verelst* observes, * “ that the property of
 “ the Proprietors of *East India* Stock has been employed in sustaining
 “ the power of *Great Britain*, and wresting all dominion from her
 “ enemies in *Asia*; and that, if the Company has occasionally ob-
 “ tained the protection due to every subject from the state, it has
 “ likewise given an assistance which no other subject could afford,
 “ has lavished its own wealth, and risked its own security in na-
 “ tional contests, in which the Company’s interests were by no
 “ means involved;” it may be fairly answered, that in doing what they did, they acted for their own particular interest, as well as for the common good; and thereby did no more than, in proportion, was done by every other company, or colony, or community of the body-politic: nor to any other did equal advantages result from the war.

In whose cause, it may be asked, were the struggles maintained on the coast of *Coromandel*? The *French* government had been long seeking to establish dominion there; which, but for that war, they would infallibly have effected, in so formidable a degree, as to have soon accomplished their great object, the destruction of the *English East India* Company; who, by the success of that war, were not

* *Verelst’s View, &c.* page 44.



only soon effectually freed from so dangerous an enemy, but, at the subsequent peace, were left without one formidable *European* rival in *India*. At an immense expence to the public, the sea and land forces of this kingdom were employed in that war; and to the same assistance have the Company been principally indebted for their subsequent acquisitions, by good or bad means, of such wealthy and extensive territories as gave occasion to their servants, to declare them to have become **THE SOVEREIGNS OF RICH AND POTENT KINGDOMS.**

If they did not avail themselves of those acquisitions to their own infinite advantage, but greatly the contrary; or if they were deceived and abused therein, the fault must have been owing to a want of abilities, or honesty, in those to whom they entrusted the direction of their affairs at home; or perhaps to a far greater want of both in those servants whom they appointed to manage their concerns in *Hindustan*. Either of those propositions might serve to demonstrate the impropriety of the *East India* Stockholders being entrusted with such power; but they can have no just reason to complain of the natural and unavoidable consequences of their own errors, or to reproach the nation with their peculiar services, being themselves more indebted thereto, than any other body of subjects in the *British* dominions.

So much for the exclusive trade to and from *India*, and for the account likewise of favours conferred, or benefits acquired, as stated by Mr. Verelst, reciprocally, between the Company and kingdom. It may be now proper to submit to the reader's consideration, a few remarks on the trade carried on, of late years, by the Company and their servants in *India*. But as this subject hath been already treated at large in the first part of *Considerations*, &c. and much hath also been said thereon in the preceding chapters of this volume, we shall now only present to the reader such additional matters as appear necessary, to corroborate, or elucidate, what hath been already laid before him.

In the better times which preceded the Company's government in *Hindustan*, but particularly in *Bengal*, when merchants of all countries were strongly protected, and no limits were set to the sales, or purchases, of any nations, or individuals; those provinces produced enough of all commodities for answering every call that could offer, and no monopolies could take place. By such means, to the infinite advantage of the individuals of those countries, there gradually had grown up, of natives and others, many opulent speculators



culators in the surplussages of products, who, from season to season, made laudable profits by such dealings, as did occasionally serve to unburthen the ryots, or the manufacturers and inferior farmers; to accommodate the itinerant merchants of other countries readily with the commodities they wanted, and also, in every way, to assist the foreign and native traders resident in the respective provinces. When treating of the unbounded extent of the former trade and consequent riches of *Bengal*, even Mr. *Verelst* thus informs the Directors:

* “Of the immensity of this we must conceive the most consequential idea, when we find, from the Custom-office-books at *Murshedabad*, that so late as *Allaverdy Khawn*’s † time, and after so many internal revolutions and foreign ravages, nearly the value of seventy ‡ lacks, in raw-silk, were entered there, *exclusive of the European investments*, which were not registered in them, as being either duty-free, or paying at *Hoogly*.”

Such were the effects of the wise system by which *Hindostan* was then governed; whereby the *Bengal* provinces became so much enriched, as not only constantly to abound with wealth, but likewise to be able to afford in specie, without suffering injury therefrom, an immense annual tribute to the Court of *Dehly*; little of which ever circulated back to those provinces again:—Full freedom of trade, therefore, under the government of the Moguls, and even under the usurping Nabobs, made *Bengal* flourishing and wealthy, and her Princes of course, greatly opulent.

But although the prosperity of the *Bengal* provinces depend entirely on the freedom of their internal and external commerce, and even the profits of the Company’s trade to and from those territories stand upon the same foundation, a quite contrary system was industriously pursued, to the ruin of those countries; by the late Select Committees, whom Mr. *Verelst* undertakes particularly to defend.

It hath been already shewn, that former Courts of Directors endeavoured greatly to encourage all freedom of trade among their dependants in *India*; the parties so trading conforming to the laws and usages of those countries, and paying the established duties. Upon such a footing, the *English*, at all times, might trade inland;

* See the 6th parag. of his letter of the 5th April 1769. Reports, vol. IV. page 413.

† Anno 1756.

‡ 875,000 l. sterling.



in any articles, equally with the Nabob's subjects; for it would be almost as absurd to suppose, that any regulations made by the Company could extend to the Nabob's dominions, as it would be to imagine, that within their own settlements, in which they were to be governed by the laws and customs of this kingdom, they could legally prohibit any resident from buying and selling. Such, also we have shewn, were evidently the sentiments of the late Mr. *Vanfittart* on the inland trade of *Bengal*; who has * informed the public, that such orders thereon, from the Company, as were in force at the time of his arrival at *Calcutta*, in the year 1760, did not contradict this opinion, which had been confirmed by the practice of both his predecessors, Lord *Clive* and Mr. *Holwell*.

All the exclusive trade which the Company were ever intitled to by acts of the legislature, was that between *England* and the countries eastward of the *Cape of Good Hope*. They were never entrusted with legislative powers for the government of great dominions in *India*; but merely with such as were deemed necessary for defending and regulating the factories and settlements which they were permitted to possess abroad, for the purpose of carrying on their trade of imports and exports; such powers having been given to them expressly because it was conceived they would tend to the increase of the national trade, and of his Majesty's revenue. It was also expressly provided in their charters, that none of their regulations, or bye-laws, for the direction of even their own servants or other dependants in *India*, should be repugnant to the laws and statutes of this kingdom.

It is therefore evident, that so long as the Company were pleased to confine themselves within the bounds of allegiance to their own Sovereign, they were in duty obliged to regulate their conduct by the laws of *Great Britain*; and when they chose to assume the government of kingdoms in *Asia*, they were as much virtually bound to govern such dominions by the laws and customs of *Hindustan*; whether they acted openly therein, or under the pretended authority of Princes, whom they upheld for a disguise.

By Mr. *Vanfittart*'s publication, last quoted, and by the letters of the Directors on this subject, recorded in the † Reports of the House of Commons, it appears, that the absurd orders transmitted

* Vide *Vanfittart*'s letter to the Proprietors of *India Stock*, in answer to the late Director, Mr. *Scrafton*, printed for J. Newbery, 1767, pages 80. &c.

† Reports, vol. IV. pages 188 to 193.



to the President and Council by the Court of Directors in 1764, were a principal cause of all the ruinous consequences which afterwards accrued to the trade of *Bengal*.

Had the Court of Directors even possessed the legal power, yet their great want of necessary local knowledge must have rendered them as unqualified for regulating the interior trade of *India*, as their servants were unfit for the carrying of such measures into execution, from being themselves so materially-interested in events. And indeed, from the first interference of the Directors and their servants therein, may be dated the commencement of destruction to the trade of those provinces; of which truth, a momentary advertence to facts will force conviction on the reader's mind.

Among the various letters from the Courts of *India* Directors, already referred to, concerning the inland-trade, that of the * 8th of *February* 1764, under pretence of doing justice to the natives and the Nabob, and of not infringing the Mogul *Furrukhsheer's* Firmaun, prohibited trading, not only in salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, but also in every other article *produced, or consumed in the country*; but, however, with a latitude given to the President and board at *Calcutta*, to add to, or improve on those orders, *agreeably to the SPIRIT* of their meaning.

Under such delegated powers, it hath been shewn, that the meaning of the Directors was immediately interpreted, by the ruling servants in *Bengal*, so entirely to their own advantage, that one of the first measures taken thereon was the establishment of a monopoly of all trade in those very specifically prohibited-articles. How far their Presidents and Select Committees consulted the welfare of the natives and inhabitants of those provinces, in the farther freedom of dealings, or how well they were qualified for legislators to a people distinguished for agriculture, manufacturing, and trade, may be seen from their subsequent orders and regulations.

At a select consultation, held the 19th of *February* 1766, upon a complaint from their tool of a Deputy-Nabob, *Mahommed Reza Kharwn*, of the oppressions practised by gomastahs in general, the Committee made the regulation, already mentioned, for all gomastahs employed in the inland-trade to be furnished with *perwānabs* by the President; in which were to be specified the places of their residence, the business they were to be employed upon, and the time requisite for each purpose; without which no man was to

* Reports, vol. III. page 506.



be permitted to buy or sell. At the same Committee, they were likewise pleased to make a merchant of *Mahommed Reza Khazn*, to whom they entrusted the purchase of *all the timber and chunam produced in a whole province*. In June 1766, for the farther benefit of trade and circulation, they adopted the notorious plan of a new and over-rated * gold coinage, which altered the state of the currency throughout the whole country, effectually drained it of its remaining silver specie, and terminated in a great loss to the Company: and at a subsequent Committee, on the 12th of August 1766, they threw into the hands of their minister the whole opium trade of the province of *Babar*.

In order to make a shew of their great regard for the poor industrious natives, at another Committee held the 15th of the same month, upon private information taken from one *Cossinaut*, in a summary way, peculiar to themselves, they collected from a number of merchants, who were accused of selling salt at prices exceeding the rates established by the Committee, no less a sum than *forty-one thousand five hundred and thirty-five rupees*: but they kept it for *such good and charitable purposes as the Governor and Council should direct*.

At their meeting of the 10th of September 1766, when they resolved upon calling all Company's servants, and other *Europeans*, from the inland-country and the subordinate factories, it was pretended to be the only means for securing the necessary authority to the government, and protection to individuals. But they excepted from this order such persons as they were pleased, upon the same pretences, while, out of regard to their own agents, particularly those employed in the salt-business, at a Committee of the 7th of October 1766, they cancelled certain penalty-bonds, which two of those agents, Messrs. *Charles Bloomer* and *Tom Lewis* had given for their good behaviour; and were also graciously pleased to indulge those gentlemen with the privilege of trading duty-free.

On the 22d of October 1766, this enlightened Committee also made a regulation to confine the trade of all *Europeans* to certain articles,

* See Appendix A, Num. XIX. page 123. The noble President pleaded before the House of Commons, in justification of his having adopted this plan, that "the gold coinage was a subject very much out of his sphere; that he was totally unacquainted with the proportions of alloy, and the mixture of metals; and that he did not receive a farthing advantage from it." See Lord *Clive's* printed speech, page 10. An honourable member present opposed to this argument, or apology of his Lordship, the comparative case of a quack doctor, who had opened a principal artery, and, after the death of his patient, endeavoured to justify himself upon his ignorance of anatomy.

† Reports, vol. III. page 523.



whereof they composed a most ridiculous list, under the denomination of exports from the Presidency and Factories; and all trade from one part to another of those extensive territories was thereby absolutely prohibited, * “on pain of confiscation of the goods, to be appropriated *at the pleasure of the Committee.*”—A few days afterwards, they likewise committed the superintendence of this business to their tool *Mahommed Reza Khawen*; who was directed † to cause all perwānahs to be immediately regittered, and, without delay, to send down to *Calcutta*, all such persons as could not produce a *proper authority* for their trade and residence in the provinces: while a number of military guards were stationed at a variety of places called *Chokeys*, for the collection of duties. And further, on their own suggestion that the country would not produce so much raw-silk as the Company had required for *Europe*, while private merchants were permitted to deal in that article, at a Committee, ‡ held on the 27th of *December* 1766, they were pleased to restrain, or prohibit *all trade* in that commodity also.

Upon the inland, or circular traffic of the *Bengal* provinces, wholly depended the prosperity of their external commerce, and the annual liquidation of a large balance in their favour, from the adjacent and other distant countries, whose merchants were used yearly to resort to their frontiers: and whatever merchants carried on this circular trade, must have been quite immaterial, so long as they peaceably conformed to the laws and usages of the country, and paid the established duties.

Yet, without any distinction made on those points, the wisdom of the *Calcutta* legislators discovered in general, that the circular § traffic of *Bengal* was particularly pernicious. The inland-trade carried on by the *French*, they likewise deemed an *encroachment*; and, as if expressly for the purpose of preventing the influx of wealth from the interior parts of *Hindustan*, they gave directions to *Shetabroy*, their collector at *Patna*, for stopping all trading boats that should attempt to pass the frontiers of || *Buhar*.

To crown the whole of such proceedings, at a ¶ Select Committee, held the 29th of *December* 1767, they formed a set of regula-

* Appendix A. Num. XXI. page 130.

† Ibid. Num. XXII. page 134.

‡ Ibid. Num. XXV. page 143.

§ Ibid. page 163.

|| Ibid. page 164.

¶ Ibid. Num. XXXII. page 168.



tions for conducting the inland-trade of the country, which their Resident at the *Durbar* was directed to enforce, as usual, under the pretended authority of their tool of a Nabob, without making the Company to appear as principals, expressly for the purpose of preventing the trade of the other *European* nations; under which regulations, *Shetabroy* would not permit the *French* to carry on any trade whatever, notwithstanding *they were* * *willing to pay the usual duties*, without orders from Mr. President *Verelst*.

It was impossible to frame laws which, considering the state of *Bengal*, could tend more directly to oppress the inhabitants, and to curb or fetter their trade; and indeed, such was the very alarming prospect, from the inevitable bad consequences of those regulations, to the manufactures and the revenue of the provinces, that the writer, then on the spot, ventured to represent their evil tendency to the Court of Directors, in his memorial, already † mentioned, of the 12th *October* 1767.

None of the gentlemen at the Board of Council, through whom that memorial was transmitted, paid any attention to its contents. Nevertheless, Mr. *Richard Becher*, one of those very gentlemen to whose attention it had been particularly ‡ recommended, and who had joined with the rest of the board, in condemning it as a production filled with mis-representations and falsehoods, after he had succeeded Mr. *Sykes* in the Residency at the *Durbar*, soon discovered the baneful effects that had been produced by those destructive regulations. In a letter of the 7th *May* 1769, that gentleman informed Mr. *Verelst*, § that the poor manufacturers had been obliged to sell their commodities at any price, which those employed to purchase for the *English* thought proper to give them; that finding no free-vent for their goods, they were discouraged from manufacturing them; and that the natives, *Armenians*, and others, had been long deprived of the liberty of purchasing goods at the first hand, to the great detriment of the revenue.

The stationing of soldiers at *Chokeys*, for the collection of duties, afforded the most favourable opportunities for the practice of every species of imposition and fraud by the *Chokeydars* and others, who

* Appendix B. Num. XXI. page 296. The Court of Directors were afterwards so injudicious as to countenance this impolitic conduct. See Appendix A. Num. XXXVIII. page 184.

† See page 82.

‡ Ibid. See also Appendix F. Num. XIX. page 474.

§ Appendix A. Num. XLII. page 199.



availed themselves of their uncontrouled military authority to detain the goods of the merchants, and to extort whatever sums they pleased for their releasement. That such was the effect of the practices consequent of this *wise* establishment of military-guards for the purposes of commerce and revenue, may be fully seen in the proofs here referred * to : practices which naturally contributed to render every part of the country, what Mr. Sykes described the most fruitful province of *Purnea* to have become, † “ *a waste, and habitation of birds and beasts.*”

The fatal effects of all those impolitic and mischievous regulations were also soon very sensibly felt by the Company in *England*, inasmuch, that from the most accurate ‡ accounts drawn up by order of the Directors, it appeared, that on the cargoes of 30 ships, brought from *Bengal*, during the five years subsequent to the assumption of the dewanee, the prime cost of which was 3,037,266 l. the Company had only gained 680,502 l.—whereas they had gained 930,700 l. upon the investments of only 1,642,180 l. that had been imported in 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ ships, during the five preceding years.

So that notwithstanding the high encomiums which the Presidents and Select Committees had passed on their own virtues and abilities, and particularly on their great attention to the Company's interest, in the vast increase of their investment (which, as the intelligent Mr. *Verelst* calculated, would yield the Company one § hundred and seventy-five *per cent.* profit) the Court of Directors were forced to complain, that their ships were returned from *Bengal* with such *depreciated fabricks*, that some of them || “ *scarce produced their original cost.*” And if a complete and faithful account were laid before the public of their sales down to the present time, the writer might venture to assert, that it would appear they have been since losing at a very considerable rate upon the whole of their calico-investments from that Presidency.

But after Mr. *Verelst* had been a principal author of every order and every regulation that was calculated to confine and fetter trade, and which had actually brought the provinces to the brink of such ruin as could no longer be concealed, it is curious to see how that gentleman filled the Company's records with long-winded, high-

* See Reports of the House of Commons, vol. IV. page 115, &c. Also Appendix B. Numbers VII. XIII. XIV. XXVII. XXVIII. and E. Num. XLV. &c.

† Appendix B. Num. XV. page 292.

‡ Ibid. A. Num. XLIX. page 250.

§ *Verelst's View*, &c. Appendix, page 119.

|| See the letter from the Directors of the 10th April 1771. Appendix A. page 252.



founding minutes and letters on the advantages of freedom in trade. Yet such was the constant tenour of Mr. *Verelst*'s public conduct.

In his minute entered on the proceedings of a Select Committee, * held the 11th *August* 1769, he acknowledges, that “the insights which he had then acquired by his *researches* into the trade of the country, filled him with the most alarming ideas of its general state;” that “the *shopkeepers* and merchants had been reduced to beggary, or forced to relinquish their business, and were gone off to the adjacent countries;” and, contrary to what had been represented by himself and the very members of this Committee but a few months before, of the ruinous consequences accruing to *Sujah al Dowlah*'s country, from the trade carried on there by the dependants of the *English*, he therein acknowledged, that the reason why “*Sujah al Dowlah*'s territories, in particular, did wear such an aspect of affluence and increasing prosperity beyond their own, was, in a great measure, owing to the accession of wealth they had received from the natives of Bengal.”

In the said minute he likewise further acknowledged, that the diffusion and freedom of trade was the foundation of opulence and internal prosperity; that it should be *as unconfined as the air in which we breathe*, and that such freedom, in *Bengal*, was more particularly beneficial, as its commerce, from the most accurate calculations, was a clear and intrinsic gain to it, equal to the whole amount of its annual exports. Moreover, that he had been assured by *Mahommed Reza Khan*, that upon a mere “intimation of a free-trade, orders for the remittance of twenty lacks of rupees from *Banâras*, *Agra*, *Dehly*, and *Lahore*, were sent to the Mogul agents.”

It must be allowed, the advantages of an entire freedom of trade in *Bengal* cannot be better exemplified than by contrasting them with the acknowledged or known effects of a contrary practice.

We have shewn, from the evidence given by Mr. *Verelst*, as taken from the government-books at *Murshedabad*, that in the year 1756, nearly the value of 875,000 l. sterling, in the single article of raw-silk, had been entered at the custom-office by private merchants, exclusive of the investments of the *European Companies*. At this period the Company's assortment of *Cossimbazar* silk used to be invoiced, upon an average, at from six to seven rupees per seer.

* At which were present, *Harry Verelst*, Esq; President, *John Cartier*, *Richard Smith*, *James Alexander*, and *Charles Ffloyer*, Esquires. Vide Appendix A. Number XLIII. page 201.



Now the greatest investment of raw-silk that was ever bought for the Company in *Bengal*, even after their servants had restrained * the purchases of all other persons, was that imported in the year 1771, which amounted to about 1,490,571 current rupees, or at twenty-seven pence each rupee, 167,689*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.* sterling.

Upon an inquiry into the source of the continual complaints which the regulations of the Select Committees at *Calcutta* had occasioned to be made, by the *French* and *Dutch*, of the interruption of their trade, President *Verelst* and the *Durbar* Resident informed the Committee, by letter † of the 28th *June* 1767, that it was impracticable to afford them any relief; because, although the trade of private merchants had been curbed and curtailed to the utmost, the country did not afford a sufficient quantity of goods to answer their demands, since the *English* Company's investment had been so considerably increased: when, according to Mr. *Verelst*, ‡ “Such was the rigour exercised “ to complete the quantity required by our Directors, that the Na- “ bob has found it difficult to procure the necessary supply for his “ household, without making application to the *English* Agents.”

Now the greatest investment, including raw-silk and every other article, provided for the Company in *Bengal*, to this day, was that of the year 1769, the prime cost of which amounted to \$ 742,288 *l.* And the *Cossimbazar* silk imported by the last ships that have arrived in the year 1774 is invoiced to the Company at as high as fourteen rupees and three quarters *per seer*.

Here the reader therefore sees from the most indisputable evidence, that so late as the year 1756, and even before the country had recovered from those internal revolutions and foreign ravages which Mr. *Verelst* describes to have brought it almost to ruin, with a free trade and under the government of a native Nabob, *Bengal* yielded more in one single article of commerce than under the pernicious operation of the orders and regulations of the *East India* Directors and their servants, after several years of tranquillity, could be procured even with prices advanced above 100 *per cent.* and with the

* See Appendix A. Num. XXV. page 144.

† Ibid. Num. XXVII. page 157.

‡ *Verelst's* View, &c. page 86.

§ Appendix A. Num. XLIX. page 249. The writer has not taken the investment of the year 1771, which Mr. *Verelst* says (page 85) amounted to 768,500 *l.* because that was artificially swelled by the most destructive purchases made in *Calcutta* from the Company's servants and others, on which the Company gave at least twenty *per cent.* upon the *durung* prices, paying in bonds which immediately bore interest at eight *per cent.*



practising of every species of artifice to ingross the whole produce of the country.

Such were the consequences of the interference of the Company with the inland-trade of *Bengal*. But before we quit this subject, it may not be improper to call the reader's attention also to the mode of forming and executing the various extraordinary orders and regulations which, from time to time, were made by the late boards at *Calcutta*, relative to the trade and government of those provinces.

On the records of the Company, as hath been frequently shewn, such regulations were constantly penned with the greatest appearance of disinterestedness and regard to the welfare of the community. If the candid reader, therefore, were to consider them, not from their nature and effects, but from the specious glosses with which they were disguised, he might even imagine, like a *well-meaning East India* Director, that upon the framing of such records, the business was done; and that the poor natives of *Bengal* had been, of late years, the happiest people on earth.

But he must be informed, that there were no effective Courts appointed to enforce the execution, or punish the transgression of such regulations; both which were also reserved to the discretion or caprice of the President and Select Committee. The progress of those regulations, in *Calcutta*, had perpetually been no other than their Secretary's causing notices on paper to be pasted up at the doors of the Council-house, the Mayor's Court, and the Fort, containing copies of the resolutions of the board, and sometimes imperfect translations made thereof by their banyans into the *Bengal* language, rarely intelligible to the natives; which, after the first storm of rain or wind had defaced or dispersed them, were thought no more of.

The same was the progress of those regulations also in the interior provinces, where they were transmitted to *Mahommed Reza Khan*, or their Resident at the *Durbar*, under whom he acted; and to the Chiefs, or the *Indian* Collectors who acted under their inspection, at the subordinate factories: while the governing servants of the Company, who *enacted*, as well as those who were to enforce or superintend the execution of such LAWS, were constantly the first and most interested in breaking them.—Thus the only barrier against the lust of rapine was a simple combination of the letters of an alphabet.

The impartial reader, therefore, who duly weighs the facts herein submitted to his judgment, cannot withhold his assent to our proposition, that the commencement of ruin to the interior traffic of
Bengal



Bengal must be dated from the first period of the Company's Directors and governing servants interfering in the regulation thereof: and if it be considered, that the regulations and restrictions which they have so made and enforced, of late years, have been equally as contrary to the laws and customs of *Hindustan*, as to those of *Great Britain*, it will also be readily admitted, that they have been wholly as illegal as they have been repugnant to reason, and tyrannical.

In such a situation of *Bengal*, could there a man exist, regardful of the welfare of his species, and not solicitous for the salutary and equitable interposition of the wisdom of the *British* Legislature, from which alone any hopes could be entertained of remedies for the evils that were daily increasing under such a government?

A rational dread of the ill consequences that might result, as well from their own directions, as from the regulations of a Select Committee who were continually assuming the highest merits from the most pernicious measures, induced the Court of *East India* Directors, by their orders * of the 15th *September* 1769, to the intended Supervisors, to restore the trade in salt to the former footing, by opening it to all persons, as well natives as *Europeans*. And the farther experience of their fatal effects, with the alarming accounts of abuses and distress which they were continually receiving from *Bengal*, at length so far opened the eyes of the Directors, that in the year † 1771 they judiciously abolished *dustucks*, and gave such other orders for the universal freedom of trade, as might, in a few years, if left to their full operation, have in a great measure revived the drooping manufactures and retrieved the almost lost branches of the frontier-traffic of the *Bengal* provinces.

But by a narrowness of mind, or a short-sightedness which hath ever attended the orders or regulations of the Directors, when their object has been to reconcile the exercise of their usurped legislative powers with their commercial interests, the same letter which contained their orders for the freedom of trade, and the protection of the natives, conveyed such other powers to their President and Council, as must naturally have rendered those orders wholly ineffectual. These were private powers, given in a particular commission under the Company's seal; whereby, in open defiance of justice, and in violation of the constitutional and unalienable birth-rights of their fellow-subjects, the Directors impowered their ruling servants in *India* to

* Reports, vol. III. page 531.

† See their general letters of the 10th *April* and 28th *August* 1771. Appendix A. Num. LI. page 250. and Num. LII. page 260.



seize and send forcibly to *England* any of his Majesty's subjects whomsoever, under such unnatural and tyrannical conditions imposed on them by * new-contrived covenants, as rendered them the mere helpless slaves of the Company's Presidents and Councils, who were thereby made the sole judges of the propriety and expediency of such cruel and ruinous transportations.

The exercise in a *British* colony of this exorbitant power by the Company's servants, of arbitrarily imprisoning, banishing, and transporting of *British* subjects by military guards, was represented by the Author of *Considerations*, as a † principal cause of that rapid acquisition of immense fortunes which would continue to bring those provinces nearer and nearer to destruction, if effectual measures were not speedily taken to prevent such violences, to enable the injured more easily to obtain relief, and to inflict exemplary punishments on such oppressors.

‡ “ Well calculated,” says Mr. *Verelst*, “ as this passage may be
“ to work upon the honest prejudices of an *English* reader, it is difficult to conceive why we are to attribute fortunes rapidly squeezed
“ out of the natives to the practice of sending a dangerous *European*
“ to *England*; or how the prevention of such violences, or punishments of such oppressors, will save the provinces from that approaching ruin which Mr. *Bolts* denounces.”

No man but Mr. *Verelst* would have dared attempting to mislead the public judgment by the starting of such a doubt; for it will be found, upon a serious examination, that no regulation could have been more favourably contrived for enabling the Company's ruling servants to continue their monopolies and other oppressions upon the natives. The ruling servants of the Company were at all times the only persons who could be guilty of such great oppressions, impositions, or monopolies, as alone could enable them rapidly to acquire enormous fortunes, at the expence, and to the great injury of the natives. No man of understanding will doubt, that such oppressions and monopolies must tend to the ruin of the provinces; and there can be no honest man, who knows any thing of the state of the kingdoms under the power of the Company, but will admit, that no native of *India* would ever dare attempt to obtain justice against such oppressors, without the assistance of an *European* advocate. But if

* See these covenants at large, Reports of the House of Commons, vol. III. pages 177 to 180.

† *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. page 147.

‡ *Verelst's View*, &c. page 7.



such *European* be made liable to be seized and transported to *England*, at the pleasure of the Company's ruling servants, it is self-evident that the natives can have no checks in their favour, for the prevention of such oppressions as must naturally terminate in the ruin of those provinces.

Upon this subject of transportation Mr. *Verelst* proceeds, in the same page, thus:—"The mode of reasoning in constant use with Mr. *Bolts* is by declaiming strongly on possible effects to inflame the mind, to mention a particular fact which proves nothing, and then very liberally to deal forth general invectives, leaving the reader to suppose practices thus alluded to have frequently prevailed. Who would not, from the following passage, be led to imagine, that the practice of sending to *Europe* had been so common as to destroy all private credit? The reader will, perhaps, be surprized to learn, that Mr. *Bolts* is the single instance of a trader being so transported during many years."

It is certain that the writer was the only instance; for several years past, of an *European* of extensive dealings and great property, who had been in the Company's civil service, being so seized and forcibly sent away from *Bengal*. But, besides the cases already given in the first part of *Considerations, &c.* the instances were innumerable of persons who had received the same arbitrary orders for departure; and who, if they had not obeyed such orders, or evaded them by seeking protection in foreign settlements, would, in like manner, have been sent away by force. From the writer's situation and the nature of his mercantile concerns, it was neither in his power or inclination to obey the illegal orders he had received: so that he was, in a great degree, under the necessity of putting those powers to the test of law, and to make such a stand in the gap, between the despotism of the Company, and the liberty of the subject, as, though it has terminated in his own ruin with respect to property, has already been of some, and would have proved of much greater service to his Majesty's subjects in *India*, had not *Asiatic* influence too much prevailed in the last *British* Parliament.

Mr. *Verelst* farther observes, * "Common sense must discover, that a power of seizing *British* subjects, for the purpose of sending them to *England*, must fall to the ground, if magistrates, having a mere local authority, should presume to release them." But so far from offering one argument, that will stand the test of common

* *Verelst's View, &c.* page 13.



sense, to prove that the exercise of such a power was or is in any degree necessary to the Company, he contents himself with a low * perversion of the arguments which were used by the writer to prove that there could not possibly exist any necessity for their so banishing or transporting persons, without a crime and without a hearing.

In another place our author thus discourses on this subject:—
 † “ Mr. *Bolts*, still declaiming against transportation, has this passage: “ But there is a direct unconstitutional use to be made of such power, which is, *as we have seen*, that of employing it to punish men for doing their duty, even in Courts of Justice. They may disoblige men in power by refusing to be pliant Judges, if in the Mayor’s Court; or pliant Jurors, if impanelled as Jurymen at the sessions; and may be therefore punished with ruin, in revenge for their honest discharge of the first social duty.”—After thus reciting the writer’s words, Mr. *Verelst* makes the following appeal to the Public: “ *Have such cases ever existed?* Has such an unconstitutional use been ever made of this power?”

To these bold questions it is as boldly replied in the affirmative, that such cases have existed, and that such abuses of the power mentioned have been often practised in *India*. Were we inclined to recur to former times, many examples might be likewise given in proof hereof, with some of which Mr. *Verelst* was perfectly ‡ acquainted. But
 without

* *Verelst’s View; &c.* page 14.

† Ibid. page 13.

‡ In the case of Mr. *Jonathan Ranson*. This gentleman, who is still living near *London*, had charge of the Company’s marine yard at *Calcutta* in the year 1751. On a pique harboured against him by the then Governor, it was privately suggested to the Council, that frauds had been practised in the marine department. On that suggestion, having previously sent Mr. *Ranson* upon a survey down the river, the President and Council, by deliberate written orders, caused his house and warehouses to be forced open, and his books and papers to be seized and brought to the fort. A black merchant of considerable property, named *Ramsentose*, who acted as Mr. *Ranson*’s banyan, was on this occasion also seized, and imprisoned from the 21st of *November* 1751, to the 19th of *June* 1752; and, for presuming to lay his complaint before the Grand Jury, they were pleased to order him to be stripped, tied up, and flogged with thirty-nine lashes of the *chawbuck*, and then set at liberty. During the time of this persecution, the resentment and power of the Governor and Council were exerted against every man who did his duty, by endeavouring to procure justice, either to Mr. *Ranson* or *Ramsentose*, and particularly against Mr. *William Weathead*, their agent, who was thereupon ordered home to *England*. Now, as when these transactions took place, Mr. *Verelst* was a Clerk in the Secretary’s office; and when Mr. *Ranson*’s complaint was brought to a hearing in the Mayor’s Court, in 1754, was both an Alderman and an evidence in the cause, we may naturally suppose him to have been well acquainted with the whole proceedings.

On this case it may not be improper to observe, that the President and Council were, at one and the same time, the aggressors; the only Justices of the Peace to take cognizance of,



without having recourse to æras preceding his own administration, it may be allowed the writer, in his turn, to ask that gentleman, Did not *Bolts* do his duty, when, as an Alderman of the Mayor's Court, he endeavoured, though in vain, to procure from the Mayor of *Calcutta* a sight of Mr. *Verelst*'s private letter, in consequence of which the * cause of *Parfcek Arratoon* was put a sudden stop to, in the moment of judgment? And did not Mr. *Verelst* know, that in *August* 1771, at another Presidency, six Judges of the Mayor's Court were suddenly ordered home for not complying with the requisition of the Company's President and Council, relative to the proceedings of the Court, in a cause wherein they themselves were parties?

With respect to the destruction of private credit, consequent of this practice of sudden transportation, although, by confounding the argument in puerile abuse of the † “*young writers*” and the “*black merchants*,” Mr. *Verelst* attempts to evade the fact, by treating the idea as a chimera; yet every real merchant must be sensible, that such an effect will be the inevitable consequence of such a practice. It hath been already shewn, and may be seen in the reports of the House of Commons, that the Directors of the Company were formerly so attentive to this point, as to make it an article in the covenants of their servants, that they should not leave their factories or settlements before they had discharged all such sums as they might be justly indebted to the ‡ “*black merchants, or natives of the country.*”

But whatever may have been Mr. *Verelst*'s VIEW at the time of his publication, we have shewn, by his own evidence, quoted in the preceding chapter, from the general letter of the 25th *September* 1769, which was just twelve months after his sudden seizure and transportation of the writer, || that such was the general decay of

of, and the only Judges to decide on criminal matters; while they were also the makers and unmakers of the Court of Mayor and Aldermen, and themselves formed the Court of Appeals for all civil complaints. From such an establishment, which still continues at every Presidency except *Calcutta*, let the reader consider what a glorious prospect of justice do those *British* colonies in *Asia* afford to the aggrieved!

This affair of Mr. *Ranson*'s was brought to *England*: but the *India* Directors contrived to make matters up with that gentleman, probably not without apprehensions, that they would have been, even then, deprived of this power of tyrannizing, had it's effects been publicly made known in *England*.

* *Vide Considerations, &c.* vol. I. page 91.

† *Verelst*'s View, &c. page 8.

‡ Reports, vol. III. page 181. near the bottom.

|| See the 39th par. of a letter from President *Verelst* and the Council of *Calcutta* to the Court of *East India* Directors. Dated the 25th *Sept.* 1769. Reports, vol. IV. page 416.



credit, that the most opulent of the native merchants preferred locking up their cash to the lending it at interest, even *to the most respectable characters* amongst the Company's servants. The ingenious reasons which the President and Council advance to palliate the evil are such as afford the most condemnatory proofs against themselves. They describe this general stagnation of trade and want of credit as owing *to the great difficulty those natives found in recovering money they had formerly lent, from the great scarcity of silver.*

If Mr. Verelst will insist, that such worthy servants of the Company could not pay their debts from the great scarcity of silver, we answer, they might have paid them in gold, of which there was *too great a plenty*: and therefore, unless he insists that those most respectable characters had adulterated the gold coin, or were deficient in point of honesty, he must agree with the Author of *Considerations*, that the diffidence of the native merchants was owing to the want of public justice; the insecurity of property; the great alarm which the practice of sudden seizures, banishments, and transportations had created, and the great losses which many of those natives had sustained from that practice. For example's sake, it may be here remarked, that no *European* ever had more extensive dealings than the writer with the natives of *India*, to several of whom his transportation hath proved fatal: for although, under a statute of bankruptcy, he hath delivered up his all in obedience to the laws of this country, yet those natives can reap no benefit from the laws at present in being, under the shamefully-pretended sanction of the authority whereof they have, through him, suffered their injuries.

But, in opposition to Mr. Verelst's doctrine, it may be farther insisted, that the effect of this practice of sudden transportation was not only the immediate destruction of all private credit and security, but that the mutual confidence so necessary in commercial affairs, which subsisted between the natives and *Europeans* in the settlement of *Calcutta* before the transportation of the writer and others, will never be perfectly * re-established, until they shall be better secured, than they

* In the *Memoirs of Russia*, lately published, there is a remarkable case in point, as to this consequence of sudden transportation; whereby it appears, that the Czar *Peter*, notwithstanding all his knowledge and abilities, by a wrong exertion of power over a single individual, ruined the whole credit of his subjects, and defeated one of the most beneficial undertakings that was ever formed for the good of his country. The reader, it is hoped, will excuse a recital of this case in the words of the author:

“ *Peter* I. during his reign, took all the pains imaginable to make his subjects good merchants, and to engage them not to sell any longer the merchandizes produced in his dominions



they are at present, against the repetition of such practice, by some future Act of the *British* Legislature.

As to the new covenants which the Company have lately imposed on their dependants, in order to give a sanction to this favourite usurpation of power, the seizing of their fellow-subjects in *India* and forcibly bringing them to *England*, they are truly such as the Author of *Considerations on India Affairs* * represented them; and probably never would have been contrived, had it not been for his case. The dispassionate representations of their evil tendency and injustice, from gentlemen on whom they were endeavoured to be imposed at another Presidency, may perhaps have greater weight with some persons than the representations of a suffering party. The reader is, therefore, referred to the Appendix for a perusal of the † remonstrances that were made to the President and Council, by two gentlemen who declined to execute them at *Fort St. George*.

There have been epochas in the *British* constitution, when, perhaps, the lives of the persons who had forged such shackles of slavery, as are contrived in those covenants, would have been deemed inadequate sacrifices to public justice, for such flagitious attempts against the majesty of the people. But although *British* subjects, allured by hopes of wealth, now tamely emigrate to *India*, bound, by covenants, to slavish acquiescence under the vilest acts of tyranny; and although such usurped powers have been hitherto no

“ dominions at second hand, by foreigners; but to carry on their trade directly in goods
“ laden on *Russian* bottoms, to foreign countries, in the manner practised by other com-
“ mercial nations.

“ In the beginning of this century, the Emperor made a trial of this kind. He sent a
“ *Russian* merchant, called *Soloviev*, to *Amsterdam*, there to establish a *Russian* factory,
“ or house of trade; and that he might succeed the better, he not only gave him several
“ commissions of the Court, but there were also granted to him great advantages on the
“ rest of his trade to *Russia*. As *Soloviev* was really a man of parts, and had all the ne-
“ cessary capacity, he knew so well how to avail himself of all those circumstances, that
“ he had, in a few years, gained a considerable capital; at the same time that his civil
“ behaviour had won him the friendship and confidence of all the *Dutch* merchants. But
“ *Peter I.* being, in 1717, at *Amsterdam*, some of the great men of the Court, who had
“ taken a pique against him, because he would not satisfy the extortions of their avarice,
“ found means to blacken him in the opinion of the Emperor; who, having caused this
“ merchant to be carried off, had him embarked on board a ship for *Russia*. This occa-
“ sioned the *Russian* trade's falling into a great decline in *Holland*, the dealers of *Amster-*
“ *dam* being thereby grown afraid of trusting any *Russian* merchant; so that it has not
“ been since possible to form there any solid establishment.” *Memoirs of Russia*, by Ge-
neral *Manstein*, page 387.

* *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. pages 118 to 124.

† See the letters of *George Smith* and *Andrew Ross*, Esqrs. Appendix A. Num. LVI. page 279. and Num. LVII. page 282.



otherwise noticed by Parliament than in being honoured with a place in their * reports; yet is the practice which they are calculated to screen, not only repugnant to the personal rights of men, the equity of service, the security of credit and private property; but likewise to the true interests of the Company, the welfare of the subjugated provinces, and the good of this kingdom.

From what has been made to appear, it must be evident to the unprejudiced reader, that the ruinous situation to which the *Bengal* provinces were reduced, from the year 1765 to 1770, was owing to the persons intrusted with the Government being placed in situations under little controul; or such, in fact, as freed them from every restraint, and enabled them to set themselves above all law whatever; contrary to every principle of the *British* constitution. Perhaps, wherever there are evils under which the governed labour, they may be generally deduced from a similar cause in every community. But if the Governors, in *Bengal*, were under little controul before, the Legislature hath since placed them under much less.

By the late Act of Parliament, of the 13th *George III.* the Governor General, the Council, and the Judges of the supreme Court of Judicature, established in *Bengal*, are, indeed, restrained from trading or receiving presents; and the same sort of restraint is laid upon all persons employed in the collection of the revenues or the administration of justice, their agents or servants. There are also, among these several wise and excellent provisions therein made, for the trying of all matters in the supreme Court of Judicature by Juries of *British* Residents; for the rendering of written evidence taken in *Bengal*, in certain cases, of equal validity with *viva voce* evidence in *England*; and for the trying in his Majesty's Court of King's Bench of all such crimes, offences, corrupt practices, or misdemeanours, as may be committed in *India* by the said Governor and Council General, the Chief Justice, or the Judges of the said supreme Court in *Bengal*, or by any person employed in a civil or military station or capacity there or in any other part of *India*.

But at the same time that these salutary regulations are made, the said Governor General, the Council, and the Judges, making together nine men, to whom all the powers of legislation and executive government are delegated, are freed from such indictments, informations, arrests, or imprisonments, as their fellow-subjects are liable to in *Asia*: whereby the Legislature hath effectually confirmed

* Reports, vol. III. page 177. &c.



the doctrine of Lord *Clive's* administration, that “*oppressions committed by the President and Council were not cognizable by any civil authority in India.*”

It hath been shewn, that the noble Lord *Clive* was the first Governor who ever presumed to restrain a man lawfully resident under the sanction of the *British* laws in *Bengal*, from trading; and he and his Select Committee were the first who systematically adopted the ruinous and iniquitous practice of sudden seizures, imprisonments, and transportations. And it is remarkable, that, by this Act, the Governor and Council also are intrusted with such powers of withholding licenses for trade or residence in *India*, or for sending men forcibly to *England*, within twelve months, as, considering the situations of the *British* residents in that part of the world, are equivalent to the power of ruining any man at will; and such as, if sanctified by the co-operation of the four Judges, might effectually secure them under any breach of the law, and protect them in any act of tyranny or rapine. In this situation, the lands, the persons, and the properties of the millions of industrious inhabitants in the *Bengal* provinces, as well as the neighbouring Princes, are, by the *British* laws, left at the mercy of nine men, who, if they should prove as unanimous and successful in their operations as the late Select Committees of *Bengal*, might renew the same devastation, with like emoluments and equal impunity to themselves.

With respect also to the regulations in this Act which relate to commerce, had they been dictated by the very Presidents and members of the said Committees, they could not have been better calculated to screen their own oppressions and blunders. The distress under which the commerce of *Bengal* has long laboured hath been proved to have been principally occasioned by the fetters and restrictions which had been imposed on it's inland-trade: yet by this Act of Parliament that trade hath been cramped by regulations almost equally as impolitic as those under which it before laboured.

By one clause, *British* subjects are absolutely prohibited from trading in salt, beetlenut, tobacco, or rice, except for account of the Company; although the Company never traded in those articles in *Bengal*, and although, if ever they do, such a monopoly must inevitably prove more destructive to the country than any trade of individuals in those articles.

By the same clause, likewise, subjects under a certain description are prohibited from purchasing any goods or commodities, by way of
within the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, to sell the
same,



same again *within* the said provinces. Nevertheless, it is provided in the subsequent clause, that all persons, not otherwise prohibited by the Act, may carry on trade *within Fort William* and the town of *Calcutta*.

In the next clause it is provided, that such persons as are restrained by the Act from carrying on any trade shall not be thereby prohibited from collecting in their outstanding debts, or from selling or disposing of the merchandises and stock in trade whereof they may be severally possessed at the time when the prohibitions, therein specified, shall respectively take place. But notwithstanding this great *indulgence* to merchants, they are by the same clause required, within *thirty days*, to deliver in to the Governor and Council General, a full, true, and just specification, upon oath, of all the goods, wares, effects, and stock in trade then in their possession, which they are obliged to dispose of *within the space of nine months*: although such may be the situation of those persons, and the nature of their trade, that three or more years may be insufficient for the performance of the task imposed on them.

By another clause of the Act, the persons therein described are restrained from trading, after their covenants or agreements with the Company for residing or trading in *India* shall be expired, without a new covenant. Under this restriction are included even Free-mariners; and those who have usually gone out under no other limitation for residing or trading in *India* for life, than that of giving security not to become *disagreeable* to the Company: under which sole condition most of the gentlemen went out, who are now in *India* of that denomination.

The practice already mentioned, of seizing and transporting, so repugnant to the rights of men by nature, as well as to the constitutional privileges of *British* subjects, from express compact with the Crown, although laid under some tacit restraints, is still so far encouraged by this Act, as must not only greatly impede the re-establishment of all commercial confidence and credit between the natives and *Europeans*, but may, likewise be productive of such evils and injuries to many *British* subjects as may provoke them to the worst acts of desperation; even such, as, in the end, may prove fatal to the interests of the Company and this country in *India*, since they will affect men in a military as well as civil capacity.

In the sixth chapter it hath been fully proved, how greatly contributed to the present splendour of the British power in *Asia*; and it is also very evident, that the same



chants, as fixed and constant residents, they must naturally contribute more to the increase of the trade and the permanent welfare of the settlements where they reside, than the temporary servants of the Company who go out to *India* for the sole purpose of acquiring wealth and returning with it to *Europe*. Upon the petition of the *Armenian Consaul*, on behalf of himself and others of his nation, it was also proved before a Committee of the last House of Commons, that they had “ of late been greatly impeded in their business as merchants, “ by the most cruel, destructive, and injurious regulations, and “ grievously oppressed by long and cruel imprisonments and other- “ wise, by the nominal Nabobs,” acting under the servants of the Company. However, no particular attention was paid to those facts, which stand so proved and on record before the House, although the prosperity of the trade of *Bengal* avowedly depends on giving the fullest protection to such merchants.

During the parliamentary deliberations on the Act now under consideration, it is also worthy to be remarked, that an honourable * Member of the House of Commons, who hath ever shewn himself equally strenuous in his endeavours for succouring oppressed individuals and supporting the common rights of mankind, presented to that assembly and moved for the insertion of a clause for enacting, “ That all *Hindoes, Moguls, Armenians*, and other merchants, natives of *Asia* should be allowed, as in all times past, to carry on “ their trade, i. e. any goods or merchandize whatsoever, without “ molestation, in, to, and from *Calcutta, Madras, Surat, Bombay, Bencoolen*, and all other ports or places within the limits of the “ Company’s charter, on paying the legal duties and customs established at the respective places where such trade might be carried “ on.”—Nevertheless, this just and provident clause was rejected, contrary to the interests of those provinces, of the Company, and of this kingdom; and contrary to every principle of sound policy: for the prosperity of all manufacturing or trading countries must ever depend on the freedom of traffic.

Did not this very Act of Parliament perpetuate the fact, posterity would scarcely believe that in so enlightened an age, the Legislature of the greatest commercial nation on earth had been seriously enacting laws to define the persons who should buy and sell the articles they were to traffic in, and the times and places when and where they should purchase or dispose of their commodities; with excessive pe-

* *George Johnstone, Esq; Member for Cockermouth.*



nalties annexed to the transgression of such rules: much less would they be inclined to believe, that such a law would have stumbled into the framing of fetters for their own men, with which they could not bind foreigners; in *India*.

But the commercial part of the law laid down in this Act is not only inconsistent with the regulations by which the Company's affairs were directed previous to the year 1763, and under which the *British* settlements in *India* were raised to a high pitch of affluent welfare, but it is undefineable in theory, impracticable in execution, and subversive of all those immutable principles which must be ever adhered to by all nations who seek prosperity or advantage from trade and commerce. The intelligent and unprejudiced reader, who attentively considers the present state of *Bengal*, will also evidently perceive that it is eludible in every point, by the agency and intervention of that race of men who act in the double capacities of Banyans and Merchants, while the DOUBLE-GOVERNMENT strongly favours such elusion; that it is contrary to the nature of things, in prohibiting that which is not bad in itself or in any relation to society; that it militates against the end proposed, for if it could be carried into the most perfect execution, it would perpetuate the ruin of the commerce of the country; and therefore, that it is defective in every circumstance, and far from being a good law.

It may farther be remarked, that the preamble to the Bill, as originally printed, set forth, that *various frauds, abuses, and oppressions* had long prevailed in the government and administration of the Company, as well at home as in *India*; and so indeed it was fully proved before both the Committees of the House of Commons: but when the Bill was finally passed into a Law, "*frauds and oppressions*" were expunged, and only "*abuses*" retained.

The few observations that have been made, it is hoped, will enable the reader to distinguish the spirit with which this Act was passed.—How far Administration, while acting with the most laudable intentions, may have been misled by designing and interested men, we will not presume to guess; but we will venture to assert, that the Act now under consideration, as to the commercial part, will not produce the salutary effects at present requisite to retrieve the manufactures and restore the trade of the *Bengal* provinces, and much less stand the test of future time.

How far the remarks made by the sagacious Lord Chancellor on the concerns of Princes, in his days, are applicable to



CONSIDERATIONS ON.

CHAP. XIII.

CONCLUSION.

IN the first part of this work, the writer humbly recommended to the consideration of the public such remedies as, in his opinion, were most necessary to correct the evils which he demonstrated to have prevailed in the *East India* concerns of *Great Britain*. According to that opinion, which was not formed in theory or speculation, but wholly grounded on facts and his own experience, he presumed principally to point out the necessity there was,

First, Of rendering his Majesty's Courts of Justice in *India*, independent of the Governors and Councils at the Company's respective Presidencies.

Secondly, Of abolishing their usurped power of seizing and imprisoning their fellow subjects in *India*, and transporting them to *Europe* without legal conviction of guilt, or even without any crime but that of being found in *India*.

Thirdly, Of taking from them all power of oppression, and of fettering or monopolizing the trade in *India*, under the mock-power of *Indian Princes*.

In the preceding chapters, which fully confirm all that has been asserted in the first part of *CONSIDERATIONS*, &c. it hath been further incontrovertibly shewn,

That a confederacy of *British* Subjects, in the characters of Representatives or servants to a commercial community, have had the audacious temerity to usurp Sovereign domination in *Bengal*.

That such rule hath been exercised by those subjects in practices that were made enormously lucrative to themselves, and proportionally injurious to their employers; while whole nations of innocent, harmless, submissive, and industrious *Indians* have been thereby destroyed in murderous wars, plundered by illegal imposts, exactions, and extortions, deprived of their native Princes, depopulated and ruined: And,

That



That such domination was maintained by those servants so long as it could be done, under the disguise of a mock-government, for the wicked purposes of concealing the possession thereof from the ruling powers of this kingdom, and for deceiving the Sovereign to whom they owed unalienable fidelity and allegiance.

It hath been also shewn, both in this and the preceding volume, that the ravages to which *Bengal* has been exposed, of late years, under the management of the Company, have proceeded, in a great measure, from the arbitrary powers given to the persons with whom they entrusted the government of those provinces.

But nothing can be more impolitic than the placing of the Governors of distant provinces in uncontrollable situations. All deputed Governors hold power in deposit only for the good of the community, and can possess no rights that are inconsistent with such an end. While they discharge the duties of their high stations with integrity, they can have nothing to dread from the collective body of the governed; but each individual has every thing to fear from the passions, prejudices, weaknesses, ignorance, or wickedness of Governors, when exercising unlimited authority, as few men will resist strong temptations to the abuse of it. The want of such dangerous power must, therefore, be the best security against the baneful practices of tyranny.

Perhaps there can be no situations in which the common good requires more or stronger legal restraints to be laid on Governors than in the subjugated provinces of *Asia*. With the uncontrouled powers that have been described, they may there, with the utmost ease, enrich themselves; while such wealth will, at the same time, furnish the means of prolongation to that power, and, together with the numberless difficulties and the delays that must unavoidably be encountered in pursuing justice against them, at such a distance from the scene of action, will likewise secure to them eventual impunity in *Europe*.

With respect to the present administration of the *British* concerns in *Asia*, the public therefore, in reality, have no security but in the great virtues of the gentlemen who have been lately appointed. And although, if we consider the late act of parliament as a temporary expedient, it may be admitted, that the choice of government could not have fallen upon more eligible persons, yet to expect the disinterested, unprejudiced, dispassionate, and wise exertions of the powers of any man, or set of men, in such situations, is leaving that to the guidance of chance which all experience shews cannot



CONSIDERATIONS ON

be too strongly guarded. The welfare of the people cannot long be safely trusted to such precarious speculations.

The monastic or speculative rights of the *Sever* *de jure*, who *de facto*, were never known, or at least, but as a screen for rapacity, and will not long stand the test of political experience in *Europe*. But, as it hath been shown, that the Company have actually thrown off their disguise of dependance on his Imperial Majesty, *Shah Alum*, and the potent Princes of *Bengal*, it is high time the Legislature of this Kingdom should completely abolish the double-government, which has so long served as a blind to every species of iniquity.

Had the enormities which have been perpetrated in *Bengal*, under that cover, been no other than the first vexations and disorders incident to conquest, many irregularities might have been readily overlooked. But when we consider the submissive dispositions of the inhabitants, who have been so made to suffer; that, in the midst of peace they have, by deliberate acts of tyranny, been cruelly harassed and oppressed; that they have been even deprived of their natural rights of trade by ruinous monopolies, not only of every article of commerce, but of the very necessaries of life; and that such monopolies have been established for the private emolument of the ruling usurpers, who, for such and other secret purposes, avowedly with-held from the *British* State the knowledge of their possession of such important territories: our admiration is excited at the forbearance of the *British* Legislature in passing no retrospective act to punish, or even to express their just abhorrence of, those enormities which have been practised under such a mock-government as hath disgraced the nation in the eyes of all *Europe* and *Asia*, without answering any national or worthy purpose of prudence or justice.

As to the Company's policy of obstructing the investments of other *European* nations by such underhand management, in the present situation of their affairs in *Asia*, - it must appear no wiser an attempt than that of ruining themselves in order to injure their neighbours. But, can it be politic to hazard a war with *France*, or any other nation, for a few pieces of muslins? When national complaints are made by the foreign Courts, will the Company now get rid of them by ascribing their causes to a Mock-Nobility? Or will administration by referring them to the Company? Should such obstructions be carried into the most effectual execution, will not the Company be eventually the losers, in their assumed character



ter of Sovereigns in *Bengal*? If the foreign nations, disappointed of their own purchases there, should prohibit the introduction of the *Indian* manufactures into their *European* dominions, will not the Company be likewise losers in their mercantile capacities in *Europe*, from the failure of their sales for re-exportation?

With respect to that part of the late act of parliament, for the better management of the Company's affairs, which relates to the commerce of *Bengal*, it may be remarked, that the natives have heretofore been compelled to resign the trade of their country to *Europeans*, who are now wholly prohibited from trading in the articles of salt, beetlenut, tobacco, and rice. But, judging from what they have so often experienced, it is not to be expected that the natives will venture to engage in any great commercial undertaking in those or any other articles, unless *Europeans* be privately concerned with them therein; for that conquerors should place themselves in worse situations than the conquered, is a mystery they cannot comprehend, nor will ever be made to believe.

If we examine what appears to have been the foundation of this prohibition, we shall find it to have been of the most ridiculous nature. It must have been either, that the *Europeans* did not pay sufficient duties, or that by themselves, or their *gomastahs*, they were guilty of abuses in carrying on the trade. If the former was the evil, the remedy was to collect higher duties. If the latter, the establishment of adequate punishments and restraints might have prevented those abuses. Without the agency of gomastahs, neither the native merchants or *Europeans* can carry on any trade whatever in *India*. But it appears, that because abuses are alleged to have been committed in the carrying on of this trade, towards the correction of which no punishments were ever effectually applied, or even seriously or rationally attempted, the trade has been prohibited altogether.

But this prohibition is equally impolitic in another light. In the first part of these *Considerations* it hath been shewn, that a space of country, in the centre of the Company's possessions, extending two hundred and forty miles, from the island of *Sundep* to the island of *Sagor*, remains to this day a desert, over-run with wild beasts, and yielding nothing but wood, wax, and salt; of which last article it is capable of producing more than all the rest of the salt-pergunnahs in *Bengal* together. In the same volume it hath also been * shewn, that under the government of the native Nabobs,

* *Considerations*, &c. vol. I. note in page 200.



foreign merchants, from even so distant a country as *Cayenne*, were encouraged to resort to those woods, called *Sunderbund*, where they erected works, called * *Tofalls*, for the making of salt; which enhanced the revenue, by clearing lands that would otherwise have remained unoccupied.

Now the enterprizing activity and the vigour of *Europeans*, which are most likely to contribute to the reaping of those advantages which may naturally be expected from so extensive a country, cannot be too much encouraged; and all the arguments that can be advanced to justify the prohibition of their trading in salt, beetlenut, tobacco, and rice, are equally strong against every other article of commerce in *India*, whether carried on by *Europeans* or natives, and may therefore with equal propriety be applied to the abolition of all trade whatever.

Little did the writer imagine, after what he had proved in the first part of this work, that the Legislature of a great kingdom, whose wealth and power are founded on commerce, would have made trading in *India* a crime; or that a magnanimous people, from whom Monarchs have been accustomed to receive their crowns, would be reduced to begging, from a deputation of a few fellow-subjects, or be asked even for the mere liberty of breathing in any part of the globe beyond the promontories of *Asia* and *South America*.——But, to return to our subject.——

The reader hath been shewn the different situation of *Bengal*, under a restrained or fettered trade, contrasted with an universal freedom therein. It hath been likewise shewn, that the practice of stationing *chokeys*, for the collection of duties on the transit of goods, hath furnished the means of great oppression. To say the truth, chokeys only serve to infest the public roads and passages; and in the present state of *Bengal* can never be put under such regulations as will effectually restrain the abuses committed by the officers called *Chokeydars*. The injuries which the country hath sustained from the obstruction of its commerce by such impositions must necessarily have over-balanced every consideration of advantage from the amount of duties so collected.

It hath been also shewn, that, although an indiscriminate cry hath been raised against *gomastahs* in general, rarely any have ever had the influence or power requisite for committing grievous oppres-

* This fact is corroborated by a letter to the Board from Messrs. *Carver*, *Storer*, *Lyster*, and *French*; dated the 10th January 1763. See Reports, vol. III. p. 342.



sions, but those employed by the Company in high stations, or for account of the Company. And whether the Company have their investment provided by *gomastahs*, or on contract, by the intervention of *Dadney* merchants, no regulations for the prevention of such abuses as have been, and will be practised, under the sanction of their name, influence, and power, will ever be rendered effectual until they themselves shall desist from all acts of restraint and violence on the manufacturers, and purchase their investments, in every respect, on the same footing as private merchants.

In such a state of things, to multiply regulations is to multiply the means of oppression; so that the most natural and effectual remedies seem to be, the taking away of all temptations for abuse, by establishing an universal freedom in trade to all men, in every article produced in the country; with the entire abolition of all duties whatever.—Instead of granting licenses for purchasing and selling, let it be made a crime to demand of any merchant his authority for either.—Instead of collecting duties at *Chokeys*, or any where else, let it be made a crime severely punishable to stop any man's goods on the highways, in the passages of rivers, or at the passes on the mountains, upon any pretence whatever — Instead of stationing *peons*, to watch the weavers and cut their unfinished webs on the looms, let regulated markets be established, for the public sale of their cloths, in every *Aurang* or manufacturing village; where the utmost vigilance should be exerted to protect them from oppression in the disposal of their goods.

Monopoly will then be prevented on the most solid and permanent grounds, because men will rarely find it practicable or advantageous to engross, when circumvented by the unrestrained exertions of an industrious and numerous people, in so fertile and extensive a country. The loss of duties on such a plan would be an object of so little moment, that to regret it would be like grudging to part with the seed that is necessary for an ensuing crop, for such loss would be soon amply compensated by the increase of agriculture, population, and manufactories. As the Company, or government, would then naturally reap great advantage in the revenues, from the consequent influx of wealth, they could have nothing to fear from the system of such an universal freedom of trade.

But there are other considerations which ought to command the serious attention of government. Such a plan would soon render the manufactures as abundant and cheap as they were when *Bengal* was governed



governed by its native Princes. I would then restore the *commerce* and the frontier traffic any branches wherever may, perhaps, never otherwise be retrieved; and it would effectually prevent all disputes with foreign nations, who have factories established in those countries.

The objections which may be opposed to this plan, are such, it is to be feared, as will arise wholly from the private interests of such *Europeans* as are sent out to *India to be provided for*; and who will not approve of being reduced, in their trade, to a level with the natives. Yet, to a mind unfettered by national prejudices, it would be difficult to offer a convincing reason, why men in *India* should not be placed on the same natural ground as the rest of their species in other countries, where fortunes can only be acquired by the means of superior industry, genius, or abilities? Or to a man, not void of humanity, why the inhabitants of *Bengal* should not be allowed the full enjoyment of those natural benefits which their native soil presents to them? To such men Lord Clive has furnished an answer, which, although it cannot be quoted for its sincerity on the occasion for which it was used is extremely applicable to our present subject:

“there a man anxious for the speedy return of his son,
“his brother or his friend, and solicitous to see that return accompanied by affluence of fortune, indifferent to the means by which it may have been obtained? Is there a man who, void of all but selfish-feelings, can withhold his approbation of any plan that promises not sudden riches to those his dearest connexions; who can look with contempt upon measures of moderation; and who can cherish all *upstart greatness, though stigmatized with the spoils of the Company*? If there is such a man, to him all arguments would be vain; to him I speak not.

The confusion of ideas that has arisen from the misrepresentations of artful men, and the narrow principles by which the *British East India* affairs have been conducted for some years past, may possibly furnish insuperable obstacles to the adoption of such a plan at this time.* Perhaps we may despair of ever seeing so just and generous an outline adopted, under the system of this united exclusive Company, whose foundation was laid in injustice, and whose commercial and political affairs, in *Asia* and in *Europe*, from

* See the 23d parag. of Lord Clive's letter to the Directors of the 30th September 1765. Reports, vol. III. page 397.



its first establishment to the present time, it is demonstrable, have been constantly carried on in a train of dark intrigues, deceptions, and partial jobs, for the benefit of the few, to the injury of the many.

We have already ventured our opinion, founded on this experience, and on the immutable nature of things, that an exclusive company is no longer necessary for the beneficially carrying on of the trade between *Great Britain* and *Asia*. On the contrary, from the recent practice of other nations, and the present state of *India*, we have ventured to foretell, that, in a very few years government will be convinced of the propriety of laying this trade open, under certain regulations, if it mean to derive any permanent benefit from the national commerce and territories in *Asia*; and not the suffering of a commercial society, when their trade fails, or the avarice of their servants prompts the expedient, to have recourse to the spoils of nations and the plunder of Princes.

Such an alteration, it is conceived, might be effected with preserving to this kingdom all the advantages which it ever derived from the exportation of staple productions, and the duties on goods imported under the monopoly. It is beyond a doubt, that if the merchants of the metropolis, together with those of the great commercial ports *Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, Glasgow, Leith, Dublin,* and *Corke*, were at liberty to fit out ships for *India*, there would not be wanting many private societies of wealthy merchants who, together, would be equal to as extensive, nay and to far greater exportations and importations than were ever effectuated by the exclusive Company. When such an alteration shall take place, in the natural course of events, many among the first private adventurers may make fortunes, while others may be ruined. But commerce, like the waters on which it is conducted, will find its own level; and after the reflux violence of the first torrent had subsided, the open trade to and from *India* might with wisdom be directed steadily to flow in manifold new channels, to the great advantage of these kingdoms.

But, while we leave the completion of such an event to the accomplishment of future time and experience, let us briefly consider the measures which appear expedient in order to produce such salutary effects as may be brought about by equity and humanity; in the present state of affairs, whether commerce or conquest be the object of government.



The most obvious and the least precarious of all ~~the~~ ^{the} are ~~the~~ ^{the} products of the earth, and the manufactures which ~~are~~ ^{are} derived from native raw-materials. No country can be more abundantly stored with these than *Bengal*; where the natives never received any encouragements for their industry, in agriculture or manufacturing, until the baneful government of the *English* Company rendered them needful. From the simplicity of their manners, and the mildness of their dispositions, as well as from every other circumstance of a political nature, no people on earth can be more easy to govern than the natives of *Bengal*. But for the prosperity of that, as of all other countries, it is necessary the Governors should have sincerely at heart the good of those whom they govern. Perhaps that of itself is sufficient to insure the happiness of any people whatever, abstruse complex-laws being no way necessary to a nation's welfare; for in politics, as in false religion, it will generally be found, that when mystery begins, honesty will soon end.

It hath been shewn that, in the ancient state of *Bengal*, the duties on trade were never a primary object of consideration to the government; whose grand purposes were at all times served by an universal established ground-rent. Mr. *Locke* and other great writers have demonstratively shewn, that this is the point in which all duties and taxes ultimately terminate. In *Bengal* however, as there is no necessity for studying the various intricacies incident to the arts of *European* finances, so it will be happy for the natives, if their present rulers never depart from that ancient system, which never can be deviated from, but to the introduction of confusion, oppression, and iniquity.

If therefore the position be true, as we are inclined to believe, that "the commerce of *Bengal* is a clear and intrinsic gain to it, equal to the whole amount of its annual exports," the art of governing that country will be comprized in few words: OBSTRUCT NOT THE PLOW OR THE SHUTTLE. It is evident, the prosperity of the country will then depend wholly on the upright administration of justice; in which situation *Bengal* might be governed with a fifth-part of the sums that are now annually squandered, in such excessive civil and military establishments as seem to have been kept up chiefly for the purposes of gratifying the avarice and ambition of individuals.

It may be thought much easier to find out errors than to redress them; but the discovery of the cause is the first step towards the cure



of a disorder: and he who does his best to remedy the evils he discovers, discharges his duty to society. On this principle, in the first part of *Considerations*, &c. the writer presumed to recommend such remedies, to the diseases he pointed out, as might have been applied without infringement of any legal rights of the Company; and might have preserved the *Bengal* provinces from the ruin which threatened them, at least until the expiration of the Company's charter, without altering their constitution. But the *British* parliament have, in their wisdom, thought proper to advance much farther, although they have chosen to suffer the continuance of the multiform monster of a double-government, rather than remove it; and, instead of remedying some of the principal evils, have only changed their form. Having, however, from facts within his own knowledge and experience, ventured to point out the grand errors which still exist in the present system of the *British* trade and government in *India*, it is incumbent on the writer, before he lays down his pen, to recapitulate such as appear to be their most natural remedies.

FIRST,—For the rendering of justice more easily obtainable against men invested with authority or power in *India*.

I. To repeal those parts of the late Act of parliament (13th of Geo. III.) which enable the Governor and Supreme Council of *Bengal* forcibly to transport their fellow-subjects from *India*; and, in lieu thereof, to define and try the crimes which are deemed deserving of such punishment, and inflict adequate penalties on the spot.

II. To compel men invested with such authority or power, to remain a limited time, at least twelve months, in *India*, after quitting their employments and descending to the stations of private men.

III. To free the *British* Courts of Justice, that is, the Mayor and Aldermen at *Fort St. George*, and *Bombay* (at *Bencoolen* there are none) from the terrors under which they labour, by rendering them independent of the Governor and Council at those respective Presidencies; and by constituting them Justices of the Peace, and Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer, and General Gaol Delivery, equally with the Members of the said Councils.

SECONDLY,



SECONDLY,—For the better securing of justice to the natives in the interior parts of the *Bengal* provinces.

I. To make it unlawful and highly penal for *Europeans*, their banyans, or other dependants, to preside as Judges, or to interfere in any business of the *Cutcheries* or inland Courts of Justice; but to establish native judges, irremovable for life; except for misconduct in office, upon conviction before the supreme Court at *Calcutta*.

II. To establish the modes of decision by juries and arbitrators, among the natives, as recommended in the seventh chapter.

THIRDLY,—For the prosperity of the inland-trade and maritime-commerce of *Bengal*, and to secure its permanency.

I. To allow an universal freedom to all men, of buying, selling, or dealing in every article produced or consumed in the country.

II. To abolish all duties and *Chokers* throughout the interior provinces, or to subject the Company's *in-estment* to the same duties as are paid by the natives or other individuals.

III. To establish public markets at all the *Aurungs*, or great manufacturing towns, where the whole care of government should be exerted to prevent forcible purchases or sales, and to guard the manufacturers from oppression.

The effects of such regulations would inevitably raise a lasting and glorious monument to the justice of *Great Britain*. But before their salutary effects could be experienced, some years must elapse. Under the best laws, it will require time to restore the manufactures and trade of the *Bengal* provinces, from the pernicious effects which, during the last fifteen years, have been produced by the operation of the Company's distrust, and the regulations of their Directors and other servants. Under an oppressive native Prince, however long lived, the natives have had some distant prospect of relief from the friendly interposition of death; but they have found the Company to be a many-headed monster that never dies. The inhabitants who have fled from their country, or abandoned their professions.



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 cy in such rights, every rational

hope or advantage to this kingdom may fairly be indulged: but
 otherwise, if the inordinate gratification of individuals should be
 suffered to continue the possession of those countries will soon be-
 come burthensome; if not (what God avert) a curse to the nation.

The progress of falsehood and delusion in the *India* affairs of this
 kingdom has been great, because supported by the enormous riches,
 and impelled by the never satiated interests, prejudices, passions,
 avarice, and ambition of designing men; while Truth, with only
 the good of mankind on her side, is not much regarded, and but
 feebly defended, against such powerful opponents. But time seldom
 fails to re-establish the empire of Truth; and the system which the
 writer hath presumed to submit to public consideration, he leaves
 to the verification of future experience; confident, that when the
 prejudices of all parties and their fomenters shall be extinct it will
 stand the test.